

"Dear Little Sister-In-Law"—A Complete Novelette

The

SMART SET

*A Magazine of
Cleverness*



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AND

HALF A HUNDRED BURLESQUES, EPIGRAMS, POEMS, SHORT SATIRES, ETC.

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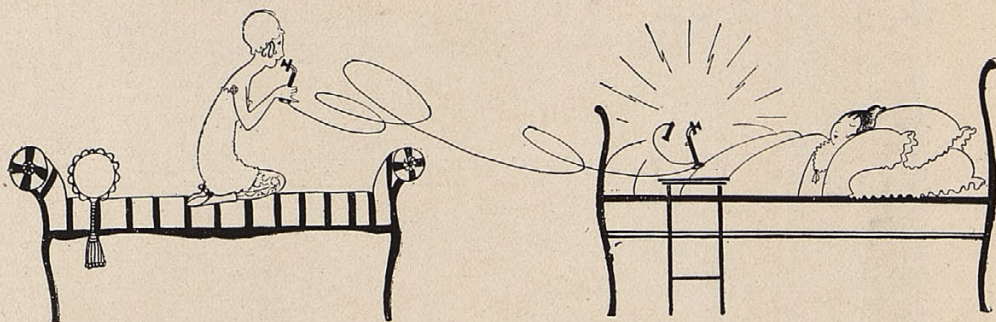
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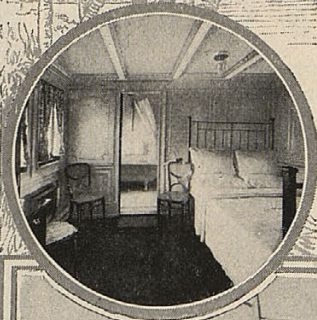
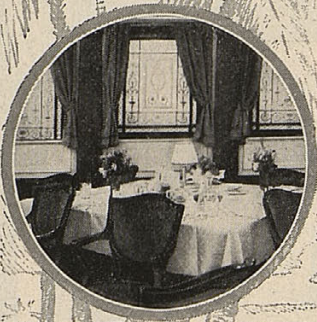
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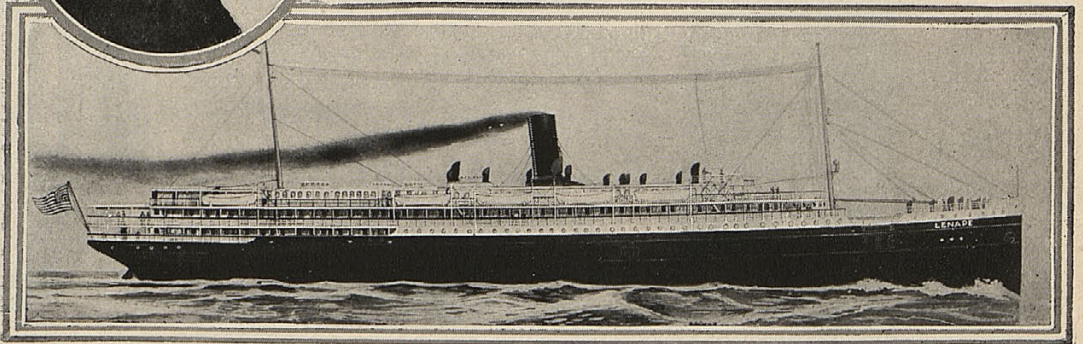


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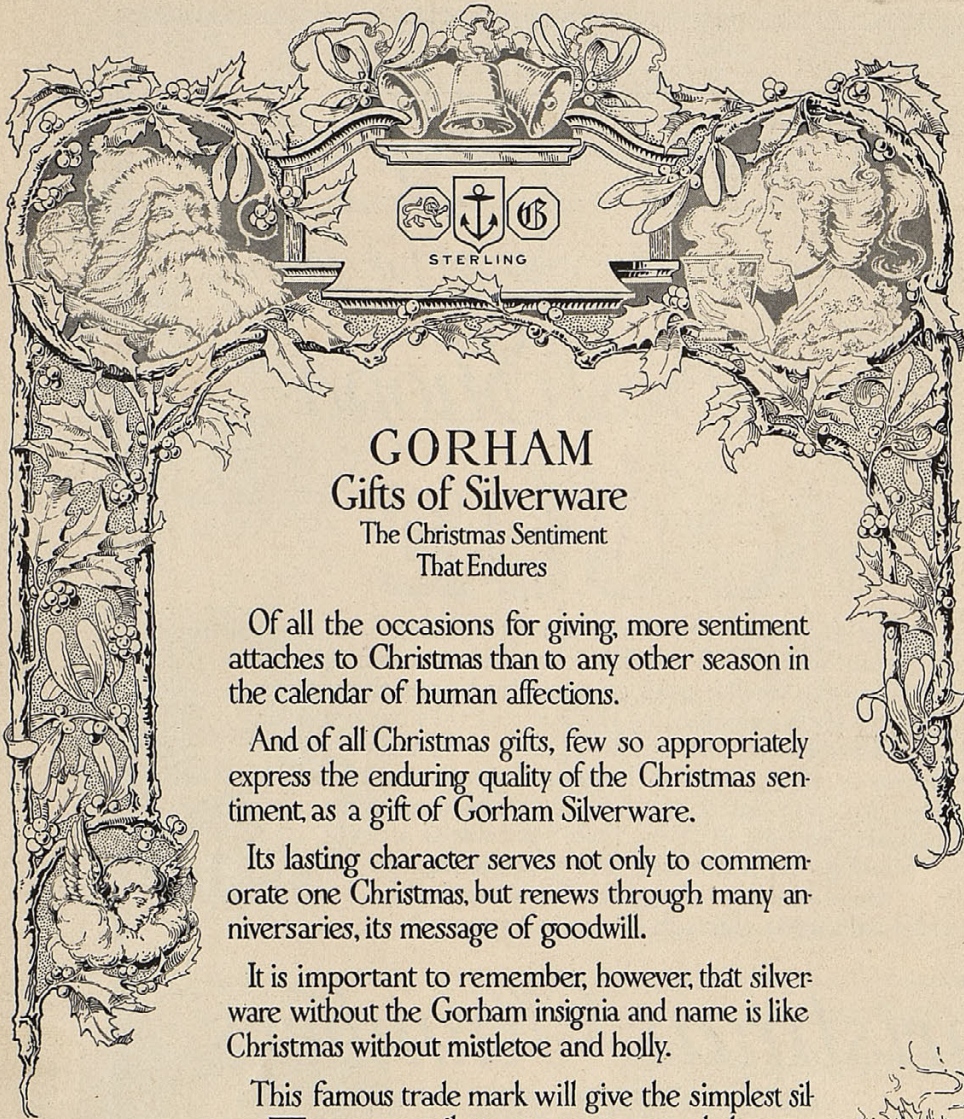
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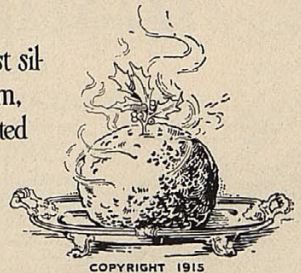
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THE SMART SET

A Magazine With Many Imitators and No Imitations

WHOM THE GODS LOVE

By Paul Armstrong

THE High Gods are wise. It is so written in every tongue. . . . A final, fearful whirl, in which we lost all sense of direction or distance or being; a halt, a great flood of cool, sweet air that swept from our dizzy brain the tangle; a sudden hush that throbbed in the darkness: a blinding silent burst of unearthly light—and we stood before the High Gods.

Not the one God of Whom we had learned as a child, and in Whom most of us have ceased to believe, but many Gods. The Gods of Egypt and of Greece, of Rome, and the strange Druids, the grotesque Gods of China, and of every people of every land and time who have lifted on high their ideal of the Great Mystery. There even lurked the special shadow of the Great Spirit of our Indian.

None was missing. Whosoever might come, he would know that this was the tribunal of the Eternal, the Everlasting and the Most High. . . .

Presently there stood revealed men of commonplace, sometimes even homely mien, but in whose eyes there lurked a softness and an understanding that made them akin to the Gods themselves. And beyond them we discerned painted clowns, fantastic jesters and ragged minstrels.

We stood amazed. Surely these, this motley throng, could not be the favored of the High Gods! They were but humorists and clowns, comedians and jesters, who had done nothing but make men laugh.

We peered about, searching for the great of the earth, the conquerors and rulers of men. But they were not here.

And from out our motley crew suddenly one, and only one, was beckoned. He was nobody, save one to whom we had turned for cheer—nobody, I tell you, save he who in the black watches through which we had plunged had made us laugh till the shades of hell echoed with our mirth. Nor on earth had he been ought but a jester, a low pantaloon, Heinie Dillpickle by name.

And here we saw him taken from us by the High Gods themselves, and we cheered as space opened beneath us and we plunged into the final abyss of the unknown.

THE BRIDES

By Helen Bullis Kizer

" . . . Each year a ship-load of virgins was sent to appease the ravening Minotaur. If the sails of the returning ship were white, it was to be a sign that the Minotaur had been slain; but if black, that the maidens had been devoured."

OUTWARD!

Balancing upon the quick waves,
The land-breeze sucking in and out of her canvas,
Outward she runs in the arms of the racing tide;
And from her decks comes the laughter of girls,
Reedy, bell-sweet, thin as a high fountain.

Farther and farther out!
Slowly she slopes to the beckoning jade-green hollows,
Smoothly she climbs to the tawny, sun-catching crests,
Lightly leaning, full-sailed, to the blue horizon,
As one who leans and listens and springs to answer a summons.
And still from her decks, fainter, with lapses of silence,
Floats back the laughter of girls, bell-sweet, reed-sweet, sweet as a chiming fountain.

And now, as a drowned white flower rises upon a wave
An instant, and disappears,
The ship looms a moment upon the rim of the world
And then slips over. And the wind blows back from the vanishing
And brings the ghost of strange laughter,
The knelling of a bell, and the sound of the tears of a fountain.

Why do ye wait, O Mothers, upon the shore?
Shall the ship not come again with snowy sails?
The daughters have gone with music and dancing and laughter;—
Was it not ye who taught them to fashion a lure
For the snaring of Minotaur, immemorial scourge,
Taught them the monster obscene might be taken and tamed,
Tamed and trained to become a producer of gifts,
A beast ugly but lavish,—willing to barter the jewel,
The price of a kingdom, ablaze on his hairy forehead,
For the flower-soft arm of a maiden upon his neck?
Why then do ye stand on the shore and listen—listen—
For an echo of girls' laughter,
Sweet as the lingering tone of far-rung bells,
Or the wind in the reeds, or the tinkle of drops in a fountain?

And when once more the pointed masts prick above the horizon,
Why do ye strain your eyes, and hold back gasping breaths
Until the ship blossoms full upon the blue water—
And then burst forth with shriek on shriek?
"The sails! The sails!" ye cry—
Did ye not know they would be black?

But alas for the vanished laughter of girls,
Bell-sweet, reed-sweet, sweet as a chiming fountain!

DEAR LITTLE SISTER-IN-LAW

By Waldo Frank

ERNEST WRENN'S course through life was like the passage of that stout vessel, *The Maid of the Mists*, among the eddies and torrents of Niagara. Especially buttressed and armored against the enfevered waters, fashioned to dash off the drench that falls across her in mass and in haze, the stubborn boat is endowed with a flawless engine and a rudder of sinew. Otherwise, the crowds that board her to brave the terrors of the water-fall, with that sharp titillation arising from near danger and immediate safety, would be pounded into eternity beneath the falling river they so adroitly flirt with.

A like engine was Wrenn's heart; like bulwarks of steadfastness were his stout body and his decisive mind. And as the passengers on *The Maid*, to shift the figure, venture forth on her decks only when encompassed in rubber robes and rubber caps, so did Wrenn muffle his emotions and sensibilities in a cape of canny reservation and a superb tissue of prudence. Thus armored, however, he was forever ready to taste Life's waterfalls and the mists that are thrown up by them. It was his boast that, even as he had skirted many, he had been submerged by none.

He was a nimble, thick-set fellow with a great crop of pitch-black hair and a long face whose constant sallowness was seldom lighted with a flush. His deep-lashed eyes of gray seemed to smoulder against the life they envisaged very much as a sneer burns the action against which it is directed—intimate in that it attains, yet aloof in that it does not seek to understand. His mouth was a straight line under a straight nose. The full, protrusive lips

showed force, not strength—there is a difference: the difference between the hand that strikes and one that helps. His cheek-bones were high and the muscles of his jaw rose in a forever-moving ridge while he was silent. And he was silent often.

Wrenn was a lawyer of growing credit. For his thirty-two years, he might have been called brilliantly successful. And he clothed his body as befits an aggressive counselor in a city where law has become a commodity to be trafficked in, like cigars or millinery.

Wrenn had a passion for espousing hopeless causes. Since his fees were in inverse ratio to the likelihood of winning, and since he almost always won, there was invariably money in his purse. Not three years out of law-school, he had gained an enormous judgment for the widow of a man who, being knocked down by a trolley-car, had developed appendicitis and died in the operation. From that time his office had been affluent in tort cases. On another occasion, a woman had had a disagreeable scene with the owner of the tenement in which she lived, due to the fact that she owed him rent. Two weeks later she gave birth to a still-born child. Wrenn convinced the jury of twelve men that the tenement owner was the cause of this disaster and that his client was entitled to \$30,000 as balm to her thwarted motherhood. Two years later, a higher court reversed the decision. But that did not in the least lessen the noise of Wrenn's victory, nor detract from the fame of his forensic prowess. Wrenn was a conquering man; and law was but one of the fields of his endeavor.

In the other, he went forth by night.

And many a timid, yearning heart beat high, then bitterly, in proof of his successes. Feminine resistance seemed to wither before the repressed glow of his gray eyes. And upon his lips there was, in some inexplicable way, a bait with a fine virtue for catching softer mouths. Self-conscious, brainy women laughed at his crude gallantry and called Ernest Wrenn a disagreeable brute. But the other kind, with breasts easily moved and eyes readily moistened, seemed to conceal a hunger to be crushed against his crassness. The woman whose body was a subdued symbol of gentle femininity seemed helpless against his brusque confidence. And since it was this softer, passive kind that he preferred, he had no reason to complain. With the instinctive economy of the hunter—found in seductive men as in all other animals—he fought shy of the type of woman whom he could not have overcome. This intuitive selection saved his face and crowned his energies.

II

WRENN had met Frances Larmor at the home of a client whom his pleadings had enriched by \$20,000 upon the instance of his failing in a \$3,000 enterprise. Such productive and progressive justice convinced the happy man that his attorney must be endowed with every spiritual virtue. For the man who can turn loss into seven-fold gain, surely no virtue is hyperbole. So Wrenn dined with his client's wife and had the privilege of chucking his daughters under the chin.

Frances Larmor was spending a month in New York. She did not care for the Metropolis; she was very glad she came from Lee, Massachusetts. But she was constrained to admit that even Lee might be improved by the incursion of a few Mr. Wrenns upon the native male population. Frances did not put it that way. The word "male" was not in her vocabulary. It distressed her to think of such odious distinctions. With New England pro-

priety, she discussed her two pet cats as "little ladies" and talked of her sister's dogs as "sturdy fellows." What Frances did admit to herself was that Wrenn was more forceful and more manly, somehow, than her friends in Lee.

Moralists and evangelists may rhapsodize to the millennium; it will still remain the truth that innocence in women is a protection only when it is a deliberate feint inspired by great knowledge. The sort of innocence that accrues from virtue and is not the mere cover of insight may be excellent food for romancers; but it is also the prime instrument of Satan. Frances Larmor, slightly drawn, slightly angular and twenty-four, was of that sort of virtuous maiden. Her beauty was of the peculiar brand yielded by the dry, bleak soil of New England. In every tenth woman of those exhausted Northern States, the sharpness of line, the aridity of blood, the inflexibility of features and the austerity of soul which all their sisters severally partake of, are merged and cadenced into a harmony for which Beauty was the only name.

To analyze Frances was to single out all these unwelcome parts and to condemn her. To see her, to hear her speak, was to undergo her latent charm and sense the powerful delights which were the more seductive for the stern casing beneath which they slumbered. But the soul has two invariable outlets—paths from the light within to that without—even in the most suppressive armor. Eye and mouth are confessionals where all may know who are priests enough to shrive. And while the desultory talk went on, sped to a proper gait by Wrenn's occasional prodding, it was in these features of Frances Larmor that he found himself engrossed.

There is a passivity in certain women that can move mountains. Wrenn was of that variety of men who regard themselves, if not as mountains, at least as possessed of certain of a mountain's qualities. But despite the solid permanence of his will, something swerved within him, as he heard the quiet sensible talk of Frances Larmor. It was

her mouth, even more than her eyes: a full, sensitive mouth, red-lipped and forever pricked with some tiny passion that turned the ends into a wrinkle of soft white skin and curled the lower lip, almost imperceptibly, to a slight show of teeth. There was a warmth about her mouth that contrasted strikingly with the adjacent coldness. Unlike her manifest self, it was almost volatile, strangely unsubdued in its responses to the most fleeting sense, patently hungry for a more primitive life, and perpetually pursed, despite its firmness, into a gentle commentary of subtle humor and unconscious passion.

In contrast were her rigid body, her strong bony arms, her graceless throat—but not her eyes. And yet, these presented an independent aspect. They were not very large; they were roundly set in concave, below her thin, high brows. Wrenn was not sure of their color. He felt from the outset that they had fastened on him—not in the least gently—and that they were devouring him. Under this action, he felt himself to dwindle. He avoided them: it made no difference. They continued to consume him. He met them. All that he was able to read—and that with indelible conviction—was their yearning hunger for more of him. This appetite was evidently a particular and a cultivated one. They seemed to say: "It is you that we want—no one else." And then, curiously, there was borne in him an impulse to give them what they craved; a feeling that it would be sweet to let them glut their passion.

Wrenn realized that this new thought, this *besoin de se donner*, was unbecoming in a man. But it availed little. The eyes hungered on; ate on—two intensive orbs with a secret for resolving mountains.

The pair sat in a corner. Frances was engrossed in the actual subjects of their conversation—winters in New England, football at Harvard, Emerson and dancing. She was unaware of her eyes. But her ignorance was no barrier to her eyes' activity and to the absorption of that which they were chan-

nelling inward. With Wren, however, all of the subtle play was being bitterly followed and appreciated. He sat and talked, feeling himself pass out from himself and sink into her. And still, he sat and talked. A vision flashed across his mind of a rabbit, laved and lubricated for slipping down a python's throat. He chuckled and said:

"Yes, but don't you think, just the same, that our theatres are lots of fun?"

Ten minutes later, he picked up from an unfrequented corner of his mind the memory of a statement of his host concerning the wealth of the two Larmor sisters. The view of an old colonial mansion with a modern limousine under its porte-cochère merged somehow with a picture of himself as a small boy holding his head in the lap of Frances Larmor and having his ears cleaned with a strenuous crash-towel. Such inanities served only to make his eyes roam. He realized that Miss Larmor's dress was a subtle shade of green and that there was much red in her chestnut hair. He observed a scar on her left wrist and that a touch of white lace peeped out from below her gown. He knew it was real, old lace—he knew its name: he had once conducted a suit against a lace-house.

He felt a need of talking about his victories in law. He did. He made arrangements for taking her to the theatre. He pulled a gold pencil from his waistcoat and, consulting it, ascertained that it was late and time to leave. He gave the fifteen-year old daughter of his host a kiss and stumbled over the tiger-head that lay prostrate at the door.

He found himself in the cold street, walking incontinently fast and whistling "Onward, Christian Soldiers," which he thought he had forgotten, ten years ago, when, on his mother's death, he had abandoned the church. A whiskey-scented beggar, who shambled up to him and prayed for a nickel to buy bread with, was enriched by a quarter to buy drink with.

Two weeks later, Frances returned to her beloved Lee.

III

THE two sisters, Frances and Eliot, lived in an ample cottage with their maternal grandsire, Dr. Clarendon. Their parents were dead. Eliot had never known her mother and all that she recalled of her father was the misty vision of a huge, blond man walking up the steps of the porch and then plunging headlong at her baby feet. She remembered that her father's eyes had looked like scaly marbles, and that, frightened by the untoward resemblance, she had begun to scream. When she stopped crying, her father was gone and no opportunity had come for corroborating her impression about his eyes. Eliot had never confided her discovery to her elder, wiser sister. Frances seemed to feel very badly about the sudden disappearance of the huge blond man and Eliot feared her marbles theory might not be appreciated at its full, philosophic value. And by the time she was twelve, she had forgotten all about it.

Upon that birthday, a game had been presented to her among the accessories of which was a box of marbles. No one had ever understood why the feverish joy with which the little girl opened the mysterious package suddenly gave way to a convulsive fit and a long period of depression. Dr. Clarendon said: "Stomach." And the consulting physician said: "Those things will happen." Meantime, the memory had returned of her father's eyes. And Eliot was rejoiced: once more, she had a secret from her elder, wiser sister.

Sedition went no farther between them. By the time Eliot was fourteen, they were friends; and a year later, her elder sister had become her goddess. Frances, who was nearly six years the senior, had long since fastened upon Eliot all of her need of adoration, all of her love for service. The urge of mute maternity and the inarticulate springs of sex—all of her that was girl and would be woman—was centred for the nonce upon her little sister, there to take root and there to fructify.

Now, a condition such as that in which the early death of their parents fixed these two prosperous children, is productive of certain constant states. Thus, the elder daughter, being in sole communion with the younger child, developed slowly, and the younger, sharing life with one older than herself, matured precociously. Thus, too, in the older girl flourished the need and love of taking-care, and in the younger the tyranny of being favored and the calm acceptance, as her due, of all her privileges. In such typical cases, it will be found that the nature of the elder girl spreads morally; that of the younger, mentally. With the responsibilities of an imposed ascendant, the one grows gentle and subdued; she learns to live in service and all of the attractive trait of girlhood—cleverness, beauty—become sobered, blunted. And with the condition of being pampered, communed with, the other blooms in those very traits which the elder has immolated upon her unnatural altar; she becomes quick, headstrong, independent, self-assertive, self-conscious, selfish. There are variations, of course, from these phenomena as from all fixed rules. But the rule remains.

The character of Frances took on a more primitively feminine color; that of repression, of simplicity and plainness. The younger girl grew strong in the more revolutionary and consuming impulses. She acquired brilliance and the ability of display; the love of soaring and of charming and of wasting. Upon this intro-active growth, moreover, the sway of Dr. Clarendon was little. To an amazing degree, the two sisters made up their own universe. In each other and themselves, they worked out all the early stages of nature's resolute scenario. They were two girls, yet they essentialized a world.

IV

ELIOT is eighteen, and Frances is twenty-four. The younger girl sits at the feet of her sister, her sense of easy domination flattered by this assumed

posture of humility. She is gazing into the fire. Frances is crocheting a cap for the neighbor's expected baby. And while she works, she speaks. Eliot's right arm is on her sister's lap. And while she listens, she is far adream. Beyond, in the shadow, an occasional high flame casts a gleam upon the white, round, skull-capped head of Dr. Clarendon.

Grandfather does not care to sit too near the fire. It smarts his silky white skin and moves the tears that are forever haunting his pale eyes. The message of the crackling logs is a different one for him—a burden of buried hopes and frozen fevers, a refrain of rumbling regrets. So he leans back in his old horse-hair leather settle—his own. And he blinks nonchalantly at the group before him, aloof and always somewhat stranger to his own superseded ways and means.

Frances has been invited to spend a month in New York. They are weighing the pros and cons of her possible, *barely* possible acceptance. Grandfather says: "Go and see the world. 'Twill do you good. You're too caught in, in Lee." Over and over again he says these words.

Finally, the sisters ask and hear no more. They pasture in themselves. Frances looks at the gold head of Eliot. And Eliot looks at the ruddy, orange-laced crowning of the fire. And the fire surges and sings and leaps through the soot of the chimney to the outer night, where the air is crisp and the stars hang rigid. And so, all of the universe is linked in their communion.

It is the third time Frances has been invited to the house of the client of Ernest Wrenn. This persistence does not amaze them; they take it as their due. The Clarendons and the Larmors are Old Families—citadels of culture. Always, it has been the custom of their blood to be sought and, in most cases, to decline. At first, Frances had refused because Eliot was too small to be forsaken, even for a month. The idea was preposterous—it was not even to be discussed. Last year, the ready excuse

was that Eliot had a bronchial cough. It silenced Grandfather: and no more was necessary. But this year, the young girl is free of colds. And Grandfather's insistence, albeit in a monotone, has its gift of emphasis.

In despair, Frances has fallen back upon a subtle point—a feeling of offense in that her Eliot was not also asked. Eliot scoffs and questions why she should be. The thought flashes that if she, and not her sister, had been favored with the invitation, she would have hurdled such a sentiment. She gluts her need of justifying this, in warm persuasion that Frances "should not be foolish." Grandfather, who knows New York as a gas-lit, murky caravan-serai for homeless fortune-seekers, displays his contemptuous acquaintance by assuring Frances that New York houses are not ample homes like theirs, and that, probably, the lack of an invitation for Eliot was due to the lack of a bed in which to place her.

This point pricks Frances' curiosity. She is minded of her ignorance of New York and of her perhaps wicked desire to experience this monster. She knows it is not like Boston and Back-Bay. She cannot imagine a home without at least three rooms for guests. She falters in her scruple. And Eliot rises on her knees to give her a kiss:

"If you stay on my account, I shall feel badly."

"If I go," says Frances, "I'll stay only a week."

"Go—and don't make rash promises," says Grandfather.

He is thinking of the time when their Grandmother went to New York to stay a week; he had been forced to go down and fetch her back after twelve days. "The flesh is weak," whispers his Puritan blood. And there rises above the snap of the flames the far-off litany of serried streets and crashing horse-cars and shouting newsboys. With it merges the din of that loud orchestra on the evening his wife had dragged him to the Academy of Music. They had played some senseless obscenity by a German—doubtless a Jew—

called Wagner. The music, he remembers, was noisy unto rudeness, devoid of tune.

Against it, he now hears the gentle voice of Frances—a little less caressing than was his wife's. He recalls what happened after the Opera. The music had tired him, and yet as they rode home in their host's brougham, through the rough and slushy streets, he had been filled with a new eager love for his already faded wife. He had leaned over and kissed her—with a fervor that astounded him. And she had answered with a new-old note in her embrace. They had passed a night of honeymoon. And the next morning they had laughed and been ashamed. But the part played in this quaint symphony by the vulgar German—doubtless a Jew—had never occurred to Dr. Clarendon. There is a smile now on his face as he sleeps; a smile such as a bather has when he floats languorously on his back, the sun filling his eyes and the water rustling like soft straw against his ears.

In an hour it will be necessary to arouse Grandfather and help him upstairs to his door. He never permits the young girls to enter his room when he is there. He packs himself to bed. He has money enough to have a valet; but he is of the old homestead stock. They kiss on the threshold always.

But in the hour of interim while the old gentleman may slumber in his chair, much can be said. The talk rises between the sisters. Still, Eliot's right arm rests on the lap of Frances—it is a bare arm, full and strong, fretted with rose and a faint curtain of down. The cap of the baby to-be grows apace. Only the fairest feelings are woven into its flagree of wool. For how many of us were our first caps knitted in so blest an atmosphere.

"After all, what Grandad says is true," says Eliot. "You should go out and meet more people."

Eliot is able to meet all and of the sort she wishes in the purple embers. But she knows Frances does not share this power.

"I am content in Lee," Frances re-

plies. "I am sure society here is good enough."

"It's pokey."

"Very well, then—you are good enough. If you feel that way, dear, you shall go out. I don't."

"You're an adorable slow old thing. It is a shame for you to go to waste."

"Eliot! How can you say such a thing!"

The girl does not jump up and fling arms about her sister's neck. "Oh, you know what I mean," she says.

"I most assuredly do not." A pause.

"Aren't you ever going to get married?"

"Why should I?"

Frances takes the strip of wool and fits it tenderly over Eliot's head, striking the sharp gold of her hair through the clinging white.

"Why should I? Haven't I my little child without getting married?"

Frances is in earnest. And Eliot is convinced. Such is the way of some young girls.

"Now, with you, it is different. You are beautiful and bright and clever. Besides, you haven't anybody the way I have you."

"I don't want anybody, if I can't have you." Eliot refuses to be outdone in this tourney of altruism. "I don't care about men. They—they give me a pain!"

The frown of Frances is caused, not by the sentiment but by the slang.

"They're all alike," the eighteen years proceed. "Always the same nonsense, always the same way of asking for the same thing. Tell me, Frances, don't men ever eat food, that they're so hungry for kisses?"

"I don't blame them for wanting to kiss some girls."

"Do they still want to kiss you?" asks the cruel Eliot.

"They've given up trying," Frances smiles sourly.

"Well, they might as well give up with me, too." And now Eliot jumps to her feet, "I can kiss you all I want, Fran—and that is all I want."

Eliot is shorter, plumper, lithier. She

springs into her sister's lap. The ball of wool rolls to the hearth fender in hazard of burning up. But neither of them cares. Eliot's arm goes about the other's neck. She cuddles close; she buries her short round nose in Frances' neck; and she kisses her shoulder and then she bites her cheek. She giggles. All of this Frances, the woman, receives passive, ecstasied.

It becomes a joust of kisses. Eliot tosses her little feet against her elder sister's shins. Grandfather is startled into consciousness. Learning the usual cause of the disturbance, he relapses silently. And now Eliot lies exhausted in her big sister's arms, her head pressed against the thin, hard bosom; her hands clasped tight above the unsupple waist.

Frances leans down, careful of the treasured burden and rescues the ball of wool from the fender. Grandfather sleeps in the shadow and sister slumbers in the glow. It is all as it should be. She goes on crocheting.

V

ONE evening, after they had retired, Eliot came into the room of Frances for her good-night kiss. Generally, Frances was the visitor and Eliot the hostess. The elder sister would tuck the other cosily in bed, open her windows, shut out the electric lamp, repeat the formula of "pleasant dreams" and then retire to her adjacent room.

Tonight, however, Eliot slipped in while Frances was still before her dresser, brushing out her hair. She turned about, one arm extended, half of her thick tresses pulled out tight before her face, ready for the last passage of the comb. She was aware that there was a reason for this reversal of custom.

Eliot stood hesitant on the threshold and then threw herself down on her sister's bed, nesting her face in her hands, and sacrilegiously kicking the pillow with her bare feet.

"Go on doing your hair," she said.

Frances turned to her task. Violently

she brushed out the curling, swishing hair, holding it at arm's length in great brown strands. Then dexterously she caught it behind her, braided it, and tied it beneath the nape of her neck with a thick black ribbon. Catching her dressing-gown up over her bare breast she came and seated herself beside her sister. She noticed where the little naked feet had sunk into her pillow, and she smiled. Where had rested the feet of Eliot, it seemed quite fitting that she should place her head. The symbolism of the little pantomime did not escape her. Very little did escape her.

"Well," she said, "aren't you sleepy?"

"No."

Frances took the gold hair in her hand and fondled it.

"Darling," she said, "your head's all dusty. Why don't you wear that toque when you go motoring?"

"I love the wind in my hair," said Eliot, digging her nose in the quilt and shaking her head from side to side. It was such loves as this that Frances could not understand. If motoring without a hat made one's head dusty, it followed irresistibly in her world that one should not motor hatless. But there was another element in her maternal frown—she was jealous even of a shrill east wind which dared take such liberties with her sister. She would have put a stop to that wind, unconditionally, though all the wheat fields of America had been athirst for it. So Frances stroked and hummed a tune. She knew that Eliot had come to her for a purpose and that conversation would serve merely to delay arrival at the point. And she was right. A subject frequently broached and remained unfinished in her mind.

"Fran—did you, have you ever been kissed?" The question was blurted out and the nose was dug still deeper into the quilt. Only, the head stopped wagging.

Frances grasped the hair she had been caressing. Firmly, much as a cat might lift her kitten, she raised Eliot's face from its cozy hiding.

"Why do you ask?" she said.

With a sudden movement. Eliot turned about on her back. The filmy nightgown flared up and the great black eyes danced with laughter.

"Is it very wicked—until one's engaged?" she said.

Frances smoothed the gown over the shamelessly bare legs and tried hard to suppress her smile.

"I suppose it is wicked; but—I—have been kissed."

"Oh! I'm so glad!" The nightgown flared once more. This time called for a reproof.

"Eliot you're immodest."

"Tell me about it! Why have you never told me about it?"

"Why are you so glad?" The mother in her was suspicious.

The black eyes of Eliot fell somberly. She knew she had been tracked. There was a silence.

"Who kissed you, darling?" said Frances.

"Billy."

"When?"

"In the woods near Stockbridge, this afternoon."

"On the mouth?"

"Hm—hm."

"Well—don't let him kiss you again. It's unsafe for a girl with a temperament like yours."

Eliot flung herself in her sister's arms.

"Will you forgive me, Fran?" she cried.

"Of course, you little darling. You shouldn't have allowed it, but it is not as wicked as all that. A girl, like you—you are too precious to squander your gifts. Wait until you love, Eliot. Wait till you are ready to give everything."

And then Eliot's tongue was loosed. They had sat together on a moss-covered rock. Suddenly he had bent over. Something strange had flowered within her, filling her with a sweet sharp rhythm that prevented breath. It had been the madness of a moment; she was sure of that; she could even trace its cause—the clump of tardy eglantine that nestled at her feet and which she had forbidden him to pick. It was

while she was gazing at the pale blossoms that he had kissed her. And then had come Reason. She had slapped his face and ordered him to bring her home at once. He had felt so guilty and looked so like Longfellow, their water spaniel, that she had burst out laughing. And that made him so angry, he almost ran the car into a tree.

"But now, Fran—now you must tell me about when you were kissed."

Frances told her and then they slept, arm in arm, in the old carved bed. The lamp in Eliot's room burned all the night. And the following morning, Frances' shoulder was blue and stiff. She had lain motionless till day, for fear of waking Eliot, whom sleep had found while her head rested upon her sister's arm.

VI

ELIOT was at the station to meet Frances on her return from New York. It required no more than the few steps from train to waiting car to convey to her the presence of something new. In Frances' love for her sister, there had crept an indefinable air of consciousness. Her love was not changed; it was merely more felt. The emotions of Frances had another occupant. Eliot was in no way crowded out. But the presence of a second interest called for arrangement of the effects of the first inmate; a more economic housing.

While Eliot had been alone and supreme in that heart, there had been no need of placing her, of judging her position, of weighing its importance. She had been in Frances' life as ether in a primal universe—ubiquitous, measureless, inchoate. But now a new sphere had swum within. Eliot was still supreme—still all-pervasive. But she was no longer alone. And even as the arrival of a guest in a house where one has had unquestioned freedom demands the partitioning of one's effects, the disposal of space, so now in Frances' mind the process was in action of making room, without disturbing or restricting Eliot, for the arrival of another.

Eliot burned to know. Her sister's letters had been replete with casual observations—at first, cold and critical; later repressed with flashes of an ill-concealed enthusiasm.

"Did you meet anyone of particular interest?" asked Eliot. And Frances told her about Ernest Wrenn.

To be sure, there was very little to tell, which may or may not have explained her alacrity in telling. Ernest Wrenn had come and come again. He had taken her to a theatre, a dance, to a rehearsal of a horrible French play; she did not know whether she liked him; of course, she did not love him. But she was made to admit that he was interesting, forceful, novel. It seemed that he was a most remarkable young lawyer. Oh, yes, he was young. She judged him thirty-five. But he was sophisticated enough, she surmised, to be a hundred. After all, it was good to be back, in fresh, plain, unequivocal Lee—where one could understand life to a measure. (Frances meant, where Life could be fitted with an approximation into one's heritage of principle.) She had had her experience; she would not repeat it; how cozy the old house looked! And by what charm had she been persuaded to live without it for the space of four strange weeks!

Frances in her narration had aroused within herself the ghost of a resentment against Ernest Wrenn for not offering her the right to hint to Eliot that he was in love with her. Such assiduities—they seemed clear enough to the younger sister. But then, Eliot did not know the wily inconsequentialities of Metropolitan men. She herself was far from conviction as to their clarity. And the frequent recurrence of Eliot's inquiries into the meaning of this or that irritated her to a chill rebellion. If Mr. Wrenn had been there that first epoch of re-action, he would have been soundly rebuffed. He was not there, however. So Frances vented the back-surge of her emotions in a sweeping profession of relief on her return and in veiled allusions to the malevolent sub-currents of New York.

By the arrival of Wrenn's first letter, the sensational visit and the towering emphasis of himself within it, had sunk behind the haze of habit. Frances was now far from dreaming about Ernest Wren. Within a month, she was nearer forgetting. So life crept on.

In the city, in the heart of the man, however, there was no such domestic panacea to urge past calms and stroke out ruffled senses. Ernest Wrenn was brooding. Natures, which, like his, are wont to stalk continuously in high places, to hunt the pinnacles of life and stress the superficial in action and in thinking, are ever the most readily touched in their foundations. All of the energies of such men go to the perfecting and polishing of what might be termed life's parlor stories. Neglected cellars rot; nor do eyes which are forever raised become aware of this. The protective tools of Ernest Wrenn were fashioned against exalted enemies. He was helpless against this maid of New England, for the good reason that she had none of the flash, febrile marks which he was accustomed to deem dangerous.

It is only fair to add, withal, that Wrenn made no resistance against this fascination. Frances Larmor was daughter of a house whose venerable name had not, somehow, militated against the acquisition of worldly goods. If he took her to wife, he would be the richer by a large fortune and an entrée into heretofore undreamed-of circles. Wrenn was not a man to marry for money or for position. He was too strong and too sanguine to deem such makeshifts honorable. But if a woman entailing both, happened at the same time to be the woman who kept him sleepless nights, what was to be done? Wrenn was not mercenary, but also he was not a Quixote. So calmly, with an eye to immediate action, in the event of an auspicious report, he took inventory of his sentiments and his emotions *in re* Frances Larmor.

On the debit side, there seemed after all to be but little. At the outset he had thought that drawbacks would

loom large. But in measure with the length of her absence and of his meditations, they appeared to dwindle. She did not coincide, to be sure, with his old cherished fancies about marriage. Frances was neither voluptuously dark, nor brilliantly blond; her coloring seemed a rather ambiguous straddle between those of his predilection—the cloudy passion of a black pearl and the white fire of a diamond. And yet her person drew him. And her voice was fretted with liquid pealing rises that hinted a treasure of lighter charms, even as its low basic pitch suggested the more solid qualities. Her character left nothing to be desired; she was sedate, conservative, devoted, constant. All this Wrenn felt and wanted in a wife, even as he had lacked them in his mistresses. There was no denying; she was fit. The man reasoned it out, and then convinced, he set sail for the attainment of his purpose.

He ran over the gamut of possible methods, much as he might have made an outline in his office of the several vantage points from which to attack a brief. And from this period, Frances Larmor began to receive more frequent letters. Gradually, the missives grew more tender, more familiar in tone; never did they touch the dangerous edge of declaration. In the essentials, they left everything to the girl's fancy—to build up and worry over. Admirably suited they were, to the final purpose of Ernest Wrenn—thus deliberately to prepare the field for a last, clinching sally which he intended to conduct in person.

Meantime, Frances was delighted at the correspondence—and obliged Eliot to read every letter that reached her from New York. She mined a certain sentiment of righteousness from this custom; whereas to have permitted a permanent correspondence to extend within the hallowed home without making in some wise her sister partner of it, would have filled her with a sense of guilt.

And now, in September came the decisive shaft. To understand how

Ernest Wrenn could have written such a note without a suggestion of forwardness or rudeness is to grasp his character. His letter explained that a hard summer, preparing cases for the fall terms, had left him weary and despondent, craving fresh air and hungry for companionship, which should be as alien as possible to the cloying, grasping nature of his Metropolitan acquaintances. Openly and confidently, he invited himself to Lee.

And upon the instance of Frances he received, not three days later, a note of invitation, indited in the shaky hand and couched in the exquisitely warm yet formal English of Dr. Clarendon. Wrenn, in answer, expressed delight at the chance to meet a gentleman who had once been so full of the affairs of Massachusetts. He would be there, upon the first day of October. Eliot and Grandfather never guessed that the invitation had been inspired, not by Frances at all, but by the direct word of Ernest Wrenn. That letter was the first one which the younger sister did not see.

VII

THE dawn rose in a shroud of rain. From her pillow, Frances looked out upon the Eastern valley, drenched and ashiver in the white gloom of the morning. She saw the pale filaments of the sun beat vainly against the lowering clouds and fade, leaving an imprint of silver blue, as if in token of an honest yet vain effort to perform its duty. The light-fretted morning swirled and veered in the dim valley and at length prevailed. Trees jutted across the shadows, stretches of sweet grass lay fresh from the cool kiss of night, and a moving fragrance, redolent of a summer which was past, came up through the window and stirred the geraniums on the sill to a subdued rhythm. Frances caught the red of her flowers, brilliantly impinged upon the pale notes of cloud and valley. A vital dew seemed to drop into her breast and make it also to stir with the awakened day—just so forcibly, and yet, just so immersed in

gloom. The girl closed her eyes and fell asleep. A long day was before her, since he was not coming until eight of the evening. She would give the sun a chance.

And so, it came about. When she awoke again, the drench was gone. A light filagree of moisture glistened on the valley. The trees were blotched with red and blue against an almost golden sky. Cow-bells rose from the murmurous silence and swam into the glaring sunlight as if their melody had been a lighter version of the blinding autumn sun. Frances stretched her bare arms forward, and welcomed the day which had been born so sadly. In this turn she saw a happy symbol. She thought of the dawn of her own womanhood and of the mournful color of those early pleasures. But now, in the maturer day no mist rested upon the valley.

The car halted and Ernest Wrenn, handing his bags to the chauffeur, stepped out on the gravel walk. On the porch, under a lamp, was the long figure of Frances Larmor. She stood there smiling, and Wrenn, stepping up, grabbed her hands and held them firmly.

"Welcome," she said.

"Thank you, Frances."

It was the first time he had used her Christian name. Frances blushed and opened the door.

"I shall show you your room." She spoke with that modest, queenly air which displayed beyond cavil the favor she conferred by not relegating that office to her servant. "We waited dinner for you. You haven't dined, have you?"

"No—but that was wrong of you. You must be dying of hunger."

"No more than you, I hope. We had late tea."

Wrenn could not stifle an exclamation of pleasure when Frances flung open the door into his bedroom. A large white chamber it was, flanked on two sides with windows, of which three, cut to the floor and curtained in light blue tulle, gave on a covered porch. A wainscoting of dark oak, contrasted

curiously with the plain-papered walls. Upon them hung quaint domestic prints, relics of mid-Victorian art: two little girls in pinafores rollicked with an undulgent kitten; General Washington, with the air of a St. Sebastian, took the proffered sword of Cornwallis between serried ranks of soldiers; a muddy canvas showed a herd of buffalo stampeding across a pea-green field and in the corner was a medley of pears, tomatoes, grapes and pomegranates—one of the earliest type of vari-colored lithographs.

Withal, the room was charming. The great blue-canopied bed seemed fit for a prince. And the stained porcelain group on the mantel—Christ walking on the sea—filled Wrenn not with amusement at such naïve craft, but with respect. A great well-being flooded him. He stepped up to Frances resolved to take her in his arms and kiss her. But just then the butler entered with his bags.

He hurried his toilet, for he knew that a hungry household waited upon him. And then he descended jauntily to the living-room.

VIII

THOUGHT and all that springs therefrom—if it be real thought—is the slowest of created things. Reasonings are the pondered corollaries of great events. The events themselves are flashes of a moment. There is no *becoming* to the intense realities of life. They are not, and when they are—full-blown, full-housed. If love at first sight is not more common in this world, the reason is that any love at all is rare. A passion that rides the mind and is not a mere sickly emanation mothered of mind and fathered of conceit, is swifter than first sight. It is apace with insight. It breaks upon the soul like a vast wave upon a shivering vessel. And then—after it is broken, the eyes look and one grows cognizant.

Wrenn stood at the threshold.

The long room was dim. In the corner burned a solitary lamp. Under it

was an arm chair and in the chair sat a girl. Warm, gold hair, cut short and plaited, answered the dead gleam of the light. A small oval face, the setting of black eyes, was tilted over a book. The mouth was delicate and soft. The nose was straight and exquisite of line, yet rounded at the nostrils; the chin cut in firmly, curving into a full voluptuous throat, which was eloquent in promise of what those childish features hid. Wrenn held his breath. He felt his muscles stiffen. He was afraid to move for fear he might move awkwardly. His mind ceased being active and sank to a fertile field for the play of senses. He abdicated domination. Delicately, like the brush of the girl's dark brows beneath her thick-cropped hair, he felt indelible lines tracing upon his consciousness. He became detached from his hands and then altogether from his body. He forgot how to fasten upon his voice. He went under, rigidly, as a saint might drown if his limbs were lashed and his feet weighted.

The girl became conscious of him. She rose—a small, not slender figure, lavish in hinted lines and coquetties of form—hidden in a shimmer of blue, which, over the supple bending waist, drooped in its mature curves upon a broad sash, the color of her hair. She stood dawdling her book against her thigh. Wrenn became aware of delicious giving flesh somewhere beneath the gown. Her hand was small and the lamp threw a ray upon the dimpled forefinger.

She said: "I am Frances' sister. . . . My name is Eliot. . . . How do you do?"

He came forward—impelled by some forgotten instinct. He heard his voice. "How do you do, Miss Larmor?"

He stood and looked at her. The girl smiled easily. And her black eyes seemed to retire beneath their crinkly lids as if the regard that sought them were too near to finding them.

"Won't you sit down? Sister will be here presently."

If he had had command of voice he would have shouted what his blood and

his eyes hurled against his tardy mind. He would have cried out: "Let your sister stay! I don't want her! I want you! I never wanted anyone save you! Let your sister rot!"

But his voice was under different orders. "What are you reading?" it said.

He found a chair.

"Oh—'Peter Pan'—you know it, of course?" She proffered the book.

He stretched out his hand to take it. A finger touched his—faintly like the wing of a butterfly. And then, just in time, Frances came in and rescued him.

The exalted mood of the elder sister barred the very possibility of suspicion. Often, since Eliot's fifteenth year, Frances had felt, and, perhaps, smarted a bit, under what seemed to her, her sister's greater charms. Where men had sought out her, the conscious weight of this opinion turned her to laconic scepticism. Eliot's superiority was to her so patent and so just a thing, that Frances came to accept it, and even to delight in stressing it.

But here, all former trends were changed and all rules broken. Love in man is frequently an accentuation of his already observed qualities. The life of a young man out of love may not be seriously different from his life in love. His emotional side may have been already fed; his sexual appetites already glutted. In a girl, however, love calls for a revolution. Her sexual nature has lain dormant or at least been rigidly suppressed. In one vast step, she emerges and becomes a woman. Her awakening is never gradual as is a lad's, with the varied opportunities and the more or less sincere effusions of his fledgling days. In young men, love intensifies; in girls, love shifts the urge of every cell, transforms the color of her thought and rakes up into dominating flame a fuel of which before only a faint glow had attained to even her own consciousness.

And so it was with Frances.

Motherly and demure and self-effacing as she had been, she now grew confident and flushed with her own powers. Her mirror told her that she

was good to look at; the same dresses which before had left her apathetic, now appeared admirable for her figure; her voice, as she hearkened to it, had a ring of youth and a charm. Her limbs seemed to move with grace albeit she had never before, like so many girls, cultivated a fair carriage.

And it became rigidly inexorably of her faith—a corner-stone of the stiff edifice which was her view of life—that she should be the choice of Ernest Wrenn. Eliot might be as fair, as ravishing as ever; no man might look upon her without convincing Frances that he loved her. It is a way of mothers and some sisters. Her dominion was as sweeping as of yore. But there was one exception—Ernest Wrenn; and he was meant as fatally for Frances as was all the rest of the world for Frances' sister.

So the tall girl moved about the house, her head swimming, her heart pulsed with glowing power, which for all its violence to her equilibrium, she would have died rather than be without.

It was, of course, accepted that Ernest Wrenn had come to Lee for Frances, and with but one intention. Upon this, the household acted tacitly, and Frances most of all. And from this was heaped up the Calvary of the unhappy lover. Timid natures grow used to conditions which inhibit the free play of their desires. But to Wrenn, who all his life had had his way, who had never swerved from the open brutal stating of his will—this unsurmountable barrier was agony. It will, of course, be plain why the ghost of an occasion to conjure with Eliot never arose from this gloomy atmosphere of love and marriage. Eliot and Wrenn were never alone. Frances and Wrenn were alone unceasingly. And when, during stray minutes, he was in the same room with the girl he loved, it was, of course, impossible to express his guilty heart.

For Wrenn was poignantly aware of the guilt that had been so cynically thrust upon him. He had come to Lee

aglow with good faith. He was fond of Frances; his regard for her and for her fitness had in nowise diminished. How should he have known that the calm, warm affection that he had felt for her was not the limit of his nature? How guess that there could be imposed upon this general flame—and without stifling it—a fever and a passion that made a maze of his mind? Wrenn did not point for himself a moral, from this quandary. He looked on marriage as before—practically, calmly. Nor did Wrenn swing to the other extreme—inveigh against his fate, conceive hatred for Frances or attempt to snatch from his bleeding heart his love of Eliot. Wrenn still was willing to marry Frances. He merely wanted to possess Eliot, to slake his thirst of her, and then if needs be, toss her crashing, like a drained glass. No jot of what he had reasoned about the girl he was ostensibly wooing had been altered. A new part of him had simply been uncovered—a new continent of yearnings and cryings-out. Meantime, however, while he strove, embattled, to break down his curious predicament, he was glad of the proximity of Frances and of the studied aloofness of the other girl.

Not many moments did disgust for Frances or abhorrence at being familiar with her possess him. Under the stifled stress of love men only of the Byronic model turn automata and give the lie to life. The angry fever of Wrenn's love had loosed his passions and those passions craved an outlet. It was through kindly affection, through wooing of Frances, that they obtained it. Of course, the harried man was swirling within a maelstrom of motives. His gentle regard for Frances was aided largely by the conventional impulse—that it was expected; that he would be a cad to fail in the conclusion which his coming to Lee imposed. Also his behaviour accrued in part from the desperate effort not so much to combat Eliot as to ward her off. In this he was aided by being assiduous to Frances. He hoped against hope, in this way to temporize his love, to stamp

it perhaps as a fleeting infatuation, by taking refuge in the allowed substantial fellowship of the girl he was con-signed to wed. And finally, there was another incentive to these wants. The specific need of Eliot had aroused in him a general desire. It is the way of our emotions. They fall easy prey to counterfeits. Frequently they seem—though it be but seeming—satisfied with what appears almost the opposite of their initial want. Wrenn's surging blood sought a feminine channel—by transference. In simpler terms he knew, instinctively, to make bearable his need of Eliot by partaking of her sister. This was not the reasoning of a cad; it was the natural resolution of a pathetic problem. Wrenn was hurled upon it despite himself—a buffet in a tempest.

And in the interim, as the days wore—lurid, unreal days—he was struggling to think, to deliberate, to decide. And Eliot lived on, blandly unaware beyond the intuition that, if she wished, she could probably win her sister's suitor. And Frances lived on, blissfully exalted.

The irony of his dilemma was far from passing over Ernest Wrenn. In the morning the three would breakfast together (Grandfather did not rise till late), and Eliot, an inordinately rapid eater, would spring up and be off. She had insisted, during Wrenn's visit, upon taking the burden of housekeeping and of marketing from her sister's shoulders. And as she went forth, tossing her gold head and singing a song, Wrenn would smile bitterly and contemplate his coffee-cup. And Frances, finished with her light refreshment, would rustle the Boston *Transcript* of the previous day and wait silently until her official lover proposed a walk. In the evening, the entire family would sit in the long room and the two gentlemen would hold forth upon all manner of convenient subjects, while the sisters, side by side, listened or worked or read. Wrenn had expressed himself too weary for society, so he was spared frequent

meetings with the inhabitants of Lee.

And now, ten travailed days had leaped the barriers of an impossible situation, and, in some wise, sunk into the past. Wrenn sat in his room and smoked constant cigarettes, taking in and puffing out the intangible texture of his predicament. His mind dwelt on the sisters—Frances, because he wished it; Eliot, because she had become one with the weave of his reality.

His attitude towards Frances had altered. He was always fond of her. But for a pathetically different reason. Frequently he told her he loved her voice—but not because it was a more solid counterpart of Eliot's. Every infinitesimal thread which fastened her to her sister he had long since ascertained and mastered. And needless to say the points of resemblance, however subtle, were legion. Both sisters had a trick of holding the forefingers of their left hand upward unconsciously while in repose. Both sisters shrugged their shoulders when they laughed and accompanied meditation with an instinctive wrinkling of their brows, an uptilting of their eyes, and a jutting forward of their lower lips. Their eyes bore the same expressions when he told a joke and their feet had an identical manner of stamping when they were impatient and of twisting upon the ankle when they sat quiet. All these tiny emanations of a coupled life endeared Frances to Ernest Wrenn. And the striking contrasts served merely to accentuate the lesser likenesses.

But of all things, the most powerful in restraining Wrenn from an instinctive outbreak when he was alone with Frances was her voice. Easily he was able to imagine Eliot speaking. And for hours, he would sway in that delusion—that he was alone with Eliot and that Eliot's words were in his ears. With difficulty he steeled himself against the fearful impulse of his lips to express the fiction of his heart—to say "Eliot" instead of "Frances." But the thought of what dire results such an error would entail made him proof

against a chance and sealed him to perfect discipline.

IX

WITH the approach of the third week, Wrenn's visit was drawing to a close. He had not proposed marriage to Frances Larmor and the omission distressed no one as it did himself. Frequently he had trained himself to the point. Always Eliot held him back. On one occasion it was some striking detail of resemblance, suddenly grown painful, that swung him upon his passion and filled his heart with a gnawing sorrow at the knowledge that what he craved, for its very presence, should be so diabolically distant. And on another occasion, it was her vivid difference which prevented him, in its virtue of summoning the spectacle of a long years' vista, weary with this mocking substitute of what he wanted.

At such times he was prepared to flee—to forsake them both—the fatally Unattainable and the ironically Ready. All projects revolved and found substance in his mind. The one solution which he could not conjure up was the solution he forever dreamed: the winning of Eliot and the propitiation, by some miracle, of Frances. Wrenn was filled now with a great pity, as well as with great regard, for the girl he had until this present figured as his wife. And so, from the turmoil of indecision, nothing concrete was born; and the visit approached a pointless termination. Of this, moreover, Wrenn was bitterly aware. Nought so easy as escaping to New York and there forgetting lay in the balance. He needed the girl he loved; and the girl that loved him haunted his soul and forbade his customary living. This was not a matter for a long siege. It required action. And to delay the step that was imperative meant merely to court a wrong conclusion to endanger his career, to bring havoc upon three lives.

Despite his knowledge, however, that the knot cried for cutting, it is doubtful if Wrenn could have summoned strength to deal the blow without the

toward aid of circumstance. The canny Artist of our mundane play knows the need of us for incident to resolve our souls. And the fitting episode is never lacking in real life. It is only in man-made drama that the spirit grows without these concrete proddings.

The Scene was prepared in our Comedy; it consisted of a hasty exit.

On the evening before the day of Wrenn's set departure, Dr. Clarendon was brought to bed with the grippe. Aware of his precarious age, the sisters were in consternation. And Wrenn found himself too useful as a moral prop and as a practical general to forsake the camp at such a crisis. What rendered the state of Frances most abject in this sickness was the color of her deliberations prior to it. She had explained Wrenn's failure to declare himself to but one cause—his unwillingness to ask her to forsake her Grandfather. Surely, it was a strange situation, and she had no doubt he had become aware of it. To leave Eliot and her Grandfather alone in Lee was impossible; to move the old gentleman to New York was preposterous. In a word, Frances realized that she could not marry until her Grandfather was dead; she could not really live until the other man of all men in the world she loved had been laid away.

The thoughts that accrued from this consciousness of struggle need not be dwelt on. She had not, for a moment, hoped for death. But the very thought of the old man's dying, come as it had, in company with a dream of ecstasy, filled her Puritan heart with gall and with the need of chastisement. And now, as an aftermath to her so innocently guilty thought, there threatened her dream's growing into fact—a fact of bereavement and of horror because of the fair sequel it inexorably urged.

No one knew the agony that sat upon the soul of this woman during that brief illness. In it all passion and all promise, all power of pain and all dreams of happiness were merged in the cruel heat of actuality; the frantic girl was almost prostrate before such

bewilderment. In her mind, crime seemed to hurtle upon life; sorrow upon love; bereavement upon the pinnacle of pleasure. Frances did not understand, for Frances did not know that this grotesque medley was neither more nor less than the Lay of Life and that within her little soul there battled and seethed in essence the farthest scope of all reality.

The condition of Eliot was different. She was naturally worried about her Grandfather. And she was passionately curious about Ernest Wrenn. For it had come upon her, in a flash, that it was she he loved. This knowledge left her cold—and curious. She eyed it from the vantage-point of emotional indifference. She did not, of course, love Ernest Wrenn. And her sister did. Doubtless, it would all evolve as it should. Love would finally take root where decency (and her desire) destined it. Eliot was convinced that this man would never dare speak to her of what lay hidden in his heart; she felt sure that every fibre of his will strained his passion toward Frances. And she had no reason to doubt that his will would win him to the obvious right end. Youth never doubts of the victory of will over passion; for youth's first passion is almost always will. So Eliot's solicitude was a simple, native one, untrammelled by complex reservations. Ernest Wrenn would be cured of his silly love; he would immediately propose to Frances and they would live, all three, forever happily thereafter.

At sunset of the third day, the old man closed his eyes and left the World.

The living room was lighted, as upon that first evening, with a solitary lamp. Frances sat bent and wracked; her elbows rested upon her lap; her hands were clasped; her eyes burned vaguely beyond the shadows. Her lips were moist but her cheeks were dry. She was not thinking; all of her mind was given up to pain. The consciousness of Sorrow and of something wrong seemed to fill her body like some concrete shape. Her breath came hard. She had the impression, holding her

hands, that they belonged to another's body—to a body of flesh and blood contrasted to her own, which seemed a mound of doubt and tribulation.

Wrenn stepped near from the gloom. Upstairs, Eliot sat silent and sorrowing. And nearby lay the corpse, a mean, dead thing, yet powerful enough to cast a throbbing shadow and to fill two eager lives with a creeping sense of the grave.

The young man's heart melted at the spectacle it felt. Frances gazed on him, with hungry, frightened eyes. And like a sheet of fire, her forebodings flashed on his mind. What an equivocal place was his, in this sad household! Near him stood the right to comfort and yet, though it stood ready, he had not grasped that right. He read clearly in those sad, swimming eyes that met his from across the darkness their inarticulate reproof; her ill-hidden hunger for the sweet luxury, after so many years of labor and of command, to give herself up to sorrow, to cling to someone stronger, to be comforted and sustained in lieu, as in the weary past, of being always and always the source of comfort and of sustenance.

He felt the tired craving of that young woman who had been Mother without tasting ecstasy—who had assumed the most deadening of burdens without first having the eternal gift which should transfigure it. Was it fair? Was it to go on?—her eyes seemed to cry their questions. And now, when Sorrow stood so near, and Deliverance so near, was she to fail to join them and weave Life from these elusive strands? He, Ernest Wrenn, stood upon the threshold of that deliverance she craved. In his hand was the loom of her future, to preserve or shatter. Upon his lips rested the token of her sad quandary. Would he fail to bring respite? Would he make his strength a mockery, her mute prayer for help a mere trophy wrenched from a heartless conflict? Or would he step forward and give her the right to shift her burden, give her the right to make him Master, give her the right, at last,

upon this high, final moment of her breaking down, to rest?

A flood of warmth spread from his heart; it brought a mist to his eyes; it brought a catch to his voice. But his eyes, despite their mists, seemed never to have seen so clearly and his voice, despite its tremor, seemed never to have said so true.

He came forward. And now she lay, a limp, throbbing burden, in his arms. Tears came and laved her consciousness. She wept and wept. And knowing herself helpless, for the first time she tasted the true sweets of womanhood; feeling herself a burden, a useless, sobbing burden, for the first time she knew how good it was to be alive.

He held her gently and kissed her open mouth.

"Frances," he said, "give me the right to relieve your sorrow. Give me the right to take care of you."

There was no need of saying more. Her arms tightened about his neck. And her heart brought forth two words.

"Thank you," she said.

It was a quiet, solemn wedding. Wrenn came up from New York so that they might be married at the Old Church, and by the old pastor. Prompted by a flawless delicacy, Frances decided to delay their honeymoon until the period of mourning had elapsed. It is a dangerous enterprise, thus to put off one's happiness; but Frances had no fears.

So they went back—all three together—to their new city home; he and his wife and the sister whom he loved. And a caretaker was left in charge of the Lee house. For the sisters had not, one moment, thought of selling it.

X

To ELIOT came the greatest change from her new environment. Frances broadened merely, to take in another function. She loved her sister as of yore; she enwrapped her husband in a devoted atmosphere. One of her first new angles was to take an interest in

his professional affairs. And Wrenn soon formed the habit of talking to her about his practice. Such suits as were mere gambling ventures with dubious justice as the wheel of chance, he was wise enough to keep from her; he knew that she would discountenance such activities and he was not tardy in discovering that the frown of Frances could be a very active thing.

Eliot was rapidly swallowed up by a young, frivolous set and in her new state of dazzlement she was not loth. But it was not the numbskulled, nimble-footed men who turned her head. Rather was it the setting in which they gyrated like so many marionettes. It is Manhattan's way of drawing—on stage or off. Against these over-cultivated, under-cultured puppets, Eliot came quickly to contrast and to prefer the domineering masculinity of Ernest Wrenn. In his comparison was food for her reacted instincts against the softer qualities of her own early life. Blood from New England that is fertile is always in revolt against New England. And this intuitive need in Eliot to break away from her past sucked her fatally nearer Wrenn. Nor did fuller knowledge of the anæmic, footless ways of city men serve in this as a deterrent. It was an unhappy circumstance.

Wrenn, plunged so ironically into marriage against the call of his blood, did not remain long in his heroic resolution. He had married Frances in good faith. The spur of the moment makes many cheap natures appear priceless. The atmosphere of Lee, the natural momentum of his going there, coupled with the open affection of Frances and the action-knitting death of Dr. Clarendon, had brought about this state. But cold and relentless is the spirit of the city against such softer, nobler enterprises. And irresistible is the steady wear of a disillusioned married life against the illusions which, paradoxically, were its cause. If Eliot had not been, Wrenn would doubtless have been unfaithful to his wife; but in the discreet way of married men

which may go on indefinitely without detection. Eliot, unfortunately, was there—intensely there. And the flash of fire which had seared him, that first evening as he stepped jauntily into the room at Lee, was not done with him yet. Possessed of Frances in the easy intimacy of his married life, Wrenn was less proof against Eliot than he had been before.

In those strange days of wooing he was better able to suppress his passion for the very reason that a general restraint was necessary. His entire emotional nature was at that period exalted—chastened by an environing condition. But now, for his illegitimate hunger, there was legitimate food. And the one consequence was that his resistance ebbed and his desire grew. A passion which is entirely and unequivocally barred is less compelling than one which is falsely glutted. In honest restraint there is a *rationale* that satisfies; in a dishonest outlet, deceiving no sense and no nerve, there is merely a goad to the desire and a sapping waste of the defensive energies.

And so it proved with Wrenn. In Lee, the idea was dominant that Eliot must be respected. In New York, every embrace of Frances served ironically to impel him toward her sister and to dislodge that idea. In this wise was Frances an active agent in her own destruction.

Doubtless the general atmosphere of New York had its part in the moral crumbling. But by far the most vital cause was the fact that he lived comfortably, that his appetite was being offered a regular appeasement. If a man is a slave to whiskey, he is more likely to succumb if he drinks beer than if he does not drink at all. Even if some scruple had impelled Wrenn from his wife, he could not have obeyed it without wrecking their meretricious happiness. So Wrenn continued to live with Frances and in grim measure went on needing Eliot.

It did not, moreover, require very much of her new life to point out to the young girl how ludicrous had been

her attitude toward Wrenn's infatuation. She had not taken it too seriously. Now, her eyes opened and read the entire truth—all of this man's desperate submission, all of his unending struggle. And at the same time she felt herself more powerfully drawn to him. The romantic impulse shared here—the feeling of awe and adoration for so anomalous a heroism; the attraction of a forbidden love and a secret martyrdom; the pleasure gleamed from the possibility of being herself a heroine as of course she would be, in the sad love for a sister's husband and in the immolation of her virgin heart upon such an altar.

Needless to say a vital passion from the outside would have made short shrift of these musty, sunless weavings. But none such was forthcoming. By the time she had become blunted enough for the love of some Manhattan Hidalgo her heart was no longer hers. It was too late. The varied, insidious elements inter-acted and compelled each other. She saw the melancholy pass of Wrenn and was filled with a romantic sympathy; she sensed the inferiority of finer-bred men and her sympathy merged with pride; she sensed the dangers and caught the high colors of such a guilty love and straightway pride and sympathy conjoined with every hungry fibre of her emotional self. The girl was ripe; and the constant presence of a man whose passion gave forth an enfevering rhythm of attraction was certain to be effective. In this case, because of such very barriers as youth lusts to break heart against, the attraction became irresistible.

So gradually, inexorably, all these component forces swam to their resultant: Love. But Eliot was aware of her hate for Frances earlier than of her love for Frances' husband. It was only after she had found rational reasons for condemning her sister and for pitying the man who had been so cynically yoked to her, that she gave countenance to her own condition. When Eliot admitted that she loved, the catastrophe

was already within doors. Before that, the approach had long since been battered down, and Wrenn had stooped to open signs of declaration.

XI

THE type of girl and woman whom Eliot came to chum with filled her with a blind admiration. She felt the cynical, cold mastery of life which material profusion had granted these assimilative parasites. And she fell down before them.

These girls soon taught her that sentiment was sentimentality; that tradition was Victorian, and in as bad taste as bustles. They presented to her the first coherent philosophy of life which she had ever known—a philosophy based on a dishonest hedonism whose conscience was a calculation, whose standard was a select publicity and whose end was the tasting of sex, like the sipping of afternoon tea, in such a restrained manner as not to spoil one's appetite for dinner. The completeness of these girls lay in their completing nothing, even as their remarkable efficiency lay in their attempting nothing. They went through life sipping, cutting off samples, discarding the meat and pluming themselves with the froth. They came to the Opera late and left early; they abandoned a style of dress upon the moment of its becoming broadly fashionable; they nibbled the lettuce of their club-sandwich, they tongued the spice of modern literature; they flirted with the men they would never know and held themselves rigidly aloof from the men in whose life they became a part.

This was the crux of their Law. They were females, after all, and they realized the subtle instinct of self-sur-render which palpitates in even the flattest breast. But all their life was a lesson to resist this instinct, all their culture was a continued search of reason for dubbing this instinct vile. Aware intuitively that they could no longer rest impervious in their chill citadel of non-producing if they gave

one tittle of themselves, aware that with woman, to give is to create, they hardened their lips and steeled their eyes against reality, fashioned for themselves a false world made of the mere gestures of life and revelled there in its mirrored pleasures, the mocking ghosts of women.

In a month, Eliot had taken on at least a perfect outer form of agreement. Her black suits and white dresses were in exact measure with the mandates of New York. Eliot was clever, fair and wealthy. She did not lack advisers and if she had the privilege of attaching herself to one or two more prominent leaders in that empty course, she was not herself without her ring of satellites.

In all of this, moreover, Wrenn proved an assiduous encourager, active no less in his words than in the spur of his attraction. Wrenn knew that his wife could not shine in the Metropolis. She was a simple, old-time woman, adverse to innovations of dress or manner, convinced that promiscuous amusements were ill-becoming in a wife and set in her fond belief that a married woman's life should centre in and radiate from her home. She was a Larmor and that let her pass. But Wrenn was aware that she would never serve to advertise him, to knit the circle she had opened, of lucrative acquaintance, to win him political and legal favors.

Eliot, however, was otherwise endowed in these prime requisites of wifehood. Subtly, half-subliminally, Wrenn went about preparing her for some future entry. He encouraged her willingness to discard mourning after the third month with many words about youth's exigencies. He manipulated her invitations, her acceptances and her refusals—and displayed interest in her newborn will to hide her long absence from the neighborhood of Fifth Avenue. In other words, he became an assiduous ally from within of the Metropolis without. And Frances was left alone on the other side.

If there is one thing that a quick, callow mind is more proficient in than

the condoning of self it is the trick of judging others. And Eliot fell heartily to comparing Frances with this shimmering, blandishing world that swirled about her. The task was really too simple; it lent itself with too much ease to the curling of lips and the twinkling of eyes. The way the two sisters dressed cried out the contrast. Buried were the days when Frances had worn her eyes red sewing a jumper for her adored charge, not out of need but out of love. Buried were the days when Eliot looked upon the gowns of her elder sister as marvels of grace and finalities of fashion. While Eliot, with unerring instinct, sought out the most expensive shops and learned soon to identify and discuss the creations of leading Paris houses, Frances found for herself a modest yet efficient tailor on upper Sixth Avenue—that relic in New York, of genteeler days. And this difference was but a symbol. The gap grew, widened by the young girl's confidence that she was right and still more by Frances' ready assistance in that opinion.

For the young married woman was divinely oblivious of what was going on. Had she found force to reprove Eliot's bent, to cry out at it in shame, the force of moral cleanliness, thus brought to play, might have proven of avail. There was no hint of such a course. In Frances' eye, Eliot was impeccable. If she chose to dress in fashion, her pretty body was a reason; if she chose to haunt the teas and to dance away her hours of sleep, her eager mind and her right of world-way overcame opposition. Nay, more—if she chose to criticize the dress and the manners of her poor, doting elder sister, her place as the gift-showered one of Earth made such action meet and due. Frances was more likely to relish such hostile attention from her sister than to rebel against it. In her blind alchemy of love, such behavior became the splendid assertiveness of youth, the spirit of brilliant girlhood—charming, in other words, and to be expected. Besides, what did Frances care? Did she not

have her husband? Frances was happy; Frances was content; Frances trudged on, eyes shut, toward the inevitable reckoning.

Unable to attain her, the spirit of the city pushed her aside. Gradually, it came about that she no longer counted in the lives of her two loved ones. Eliot deemed her a "dear old thing"; told her as much, received a smile of thanks and went her way. Wrenn, waxing confident in her blindness, adhered to the amenities of his position, furnished her amply with such attentions and such words as she could transform, for her instinctive hunger, into tokens of his love—and went his way. Frances, happy in her household, in her charities, in the activities of her sister and her husband, avoided Society and remained steadfast.

She learned that she was to be a mother. For hours she would sit after her duties had been despatched and weave golden dreams for the future of her son. (She was sure, in her false biology, that it was going to be a son; her husband's nature seemed to her so much the more compelling.) And in the meantime Ernest Wrenn was busy clinching his ascendant practice; and Eliot was dancing at an afternoon function.

With the autumn, the young girl threw off the last vestige of mourning and plunged deep into the maze of pleasure. Invitations flowed in for all three.

"You go with Ernest," Frances said to her sister. And it became a frequent rule for the husband and the girl to appear together at dinners and at dances. Manhattan is used to far stranger combinations. This one caused no comment whatsoever. There were a dozen natural reasons why a young wife might wish to stay at home. Society, convinced that those of Mrs. Wrenn were natural, was little interested and hence discreet. Withal, this uncomplemented pairing was herald of the end.

Without warning, and without avowal, came the first break into deed, of their long-nurtured passion. With the

summer, the two had attained an eye-language which insured perfect mutuality. Wrenn was well conscious of his ascendant over Eliot. He knew that the moment of exerting it lay cradled in his will. And thus enervated, he refrained, caught up by a last flash of decency. A great passion, rising up from a period of hopelessness into one of knowledge that it is returned, frequently finds an exquisite comfort in delaying the actual joy that it now holds entailed. For an interval, it is content to bask inactive, envisaging a feverish future. This was the state of Wrenn and Eliot. They swam in a pricking atmosphere of anticipation. Each knew what was inevitable. Each refrained from forcing it, while the condition of holding back was still within their power.

Of course, the states of the pair were not the same. Yet real love may be a mystery for a man quite as much as it is sure to be for a girl. Of the two, Wrenn was the more frightened, the more timid. He no longer doubted his domination. But he had fears of how Eliot would act in the high moment of treachery; and his experience in life inspired qualms and sudden, lurid imaginings as to possible results. Eliot had no such fear about Wrenn, since he was, of course, to be the aggressor; and she entertained no qualms because her love, coupled with her ignorance, had blinded her to consequences and completely subverted her moral sense. Her sister was unfortunate—but she was a fool. The result might be a scandal—but scandals were coveted, although dangerous accomplishments, in her cynical-romantic world.

The last two months of summer, she had been away—on fleeting visits in the mountains and the sea-shore. She returned, soaked with the fervid flush of nature, exalted unconsciously by her communion with the ripe bloom of the full-bloom season. The men who had courted her had succeeded only in awakening undreamed-of desires—acrid, particular ones that she would have died, a year ago, rather than avow.

And with the inadequacy of these summer suitors, the vital, mind-drowning power of Wrenn had grown apace.

XII

THEY sat in their machine, hot and wide-awake after the dance. They had left early. They had not danced together, but Wrenn had danced with half-naked women and Eliot had danced with active, surexalted men. In this mutual avoidance, each had lain passionately fallow, each had been made fertile for the other. Eliot sank back into the cushioned corner while the swift car swung up the silent avenue. Pale-blue lights flashed against the shiny asphalt; the houses seemed aloof and soft and knowing; the air had a purple fret. And it was warm in their limousine. The young girl threw open her cloak—a simple sweep of dazzling emerald. Her short gold hair was filleted in a band of silver; her bosom rose heatedly against a mazy bodice of cream-colored gauze. Her eyes smoldered in the long-arched lashes.

Eliot slipped off her gloves; Wrenn reached over and grasped her hand. With a swift motion, he pulled her toward him. She fell against his breast and their lips met with a bruising force. Then, she sank back to her cushion. No word was spoken.

Before her door, he took her shoulders between his large boyish hands. A tremor shot through his body; a passionate plea was in his eyes. Eliot read his desire and her lips parted. Almost imperceptibly she shook her head—slowly, gently. And then, she stepped within her room and locked the door. Calmly, as in a dream, she discarded her clothes and gazed at her body in the mirror. And then, once more, she shook her head gently, hopelessly. And her lips smiled. It had come; she would fight and rend; but she would lose. Inexorably, she knew that she would lose. There was no going back. In a flood of horror, she turned out the light and seeking her gown in the darkness, crept shuddering to bed.

Wrenn was already sleeping beside his wife.

For a week, they shunned each other's eyes. Business especially concocted for the purpose kept Wrenn late at his office and compelled his dining at his club. He wanted too much to see Eliot; he wanted too little to face Frances. The last breath of his conscience was a rattle designed to disturb the glassy surface of his desire. He had no further wish to step back; that impulse was exclusively Eliot's. He merely objected to seeing Frances. It made him uncomfortable; but doubtless, he would be cured of that.

With Eliot, the mute event worked in another wise. She sought out her sister. It would have been easy enough to escape her. When she arose, Frances was usually out on various altruistic errands; and after her breakfast, Eliot's whole day could well be parcelled out among frivolous yet importunate engagements. The hour of dressing for the evening was the sole time when the two erstwhile inseparable sisters were wont to be together. For then, Frances would come to the room and sit and watch while her beloved sister—always her child—donned dainty raiment from hair to toe. She would delight in the young girl's beauty of limb and line, in the delicacy of the garments she chose to offset and to lie clinging against her flesh—delight in this, with that fastidious, intensive pleasure which only a woman (and an artist) can glean from a woman's body.

But now, short visits no longer satisfied the perverse girl. She broke an engagement and delighted the bewildered Frances by requesting that they should have a cozy tea in *tête-à-tête*. It had been a long time since the last one. Frances approached it, eager and blissful, as a college boy goes to his assignation. She chose to read in Eliot's request a first sign of disaffection from all this strenuous amusement—a first step back to the fold of her domestic love. Not for a moment did Frances doubt that her sister would get over these

frivolities and settle down. And, of course, Frances was right.

In how different a spirit did Eliot seek out her sister! Exact motive she did not have. Her need was to feel her way, to ascertain exactly where fate had cast her. She was curious about her sister; she craved satisfaction as to the extent of her innocence or knowledge. She realized that, soon or late, her sister must be faced; and she was eager to be trained. Her method was, indeed, that of the canny metropolis. Had her friends been present at that tragic tea where Eliot sat smiling upon Frances, they would have flushed for envy. All emotions save that of guilt pounded in that white, fledgling bosom. Eliot tasted fear and hatred, desire and disgust. But the white wings of conscience had flown that charming mansion. Perhaps, predominant over all other impulse in Eliot's heart was that of clinching a final justice for her guilty love from out this talk with Frances. She had to find a reason to despise, to disdain; a reason for being cruel; a reason for pitying the man she loved; a reason for shattering his bonds. And in accord with the gospel of her new sisters, she was successful.

Did the vision of her Childhood not steal upon these serried calculations? Did not a former, hallowed love cast a white glow of shame over all these shadows? Alas! The memory of gentle past quails before a relentless present. Eliot was no longer the singing, leaping little girl of Lee. If this cold, smiling creature that sat with Frances did have a childhood, seek it rather within the city walls, in the high temples of Mammon, in the garish purlieus of Babylon, born palsied and tottering and top-heavy. Do not seek it in the breeze-swept hill of the Berkshires. It sprang from the piled rocks and battlements of Commerce—for this creature was the child of Commerce, hard and determined like her sire, yet stripped of her sire's solitary mission. She was the mocking answer of material Progress—the inevitable tearing-down with all the energies of Progress,

of that which Progress had so vainly builded. The same name had Eliot as of old; but in every fibre, she was a different being. And Frances Wrenn was always Frances Larmor. The City's neophyte was aimed to vent the City's hate upon her who had disdained the City's bigoted dominion.

XIII

It was a Saturday afternoon. Wrenn had come home early, mystically conscious not only that he would find Eliot but that Eliot would be expecting him. A-tremble with a strange prophetic thrill, he hung his coat slowly on the rack and went down the long hall into the sitting-room. She stood, facing the door, her eyes half shut, as if the sound of his approaching steps had been so many strokes of fate to be caught up in ecstasy. She was clad in a light suit of *mordorée* whose hard lines compressed her figure into a seductive, restrained slenderness. She wore a small black-velveted hat, from beneath which came forth stray gleams of golden hair. She had just come in.

Wrenn stepped up to her, his face white with hunger. He placed his right arm behind her shoulders, pressing his other hand against her breast and bent her backward into his embrace. Their minds swung out into a haze; their breaths burned each other; she leaned sinuous and prone against his support and he, holding her in his arms, strained his body forward. They were within a fibre's weight of falling. They seemed fixed in space. And then only, when the highest fever of that embrace had burned away, did their lips meet.

Full in Wrenn's face over the left shoulder of the girl, was a portiered door. The heavy curtain parted. And Frances appeared upon the threshold. Wrenn's eyes did not see. The frenzy which had driven the two together, after a week of agonized seclusion—him from his downtown office, her from a reception—to this embrace from opposite corners of the city, had left no

room for sight or rational inquiry. Neither of the pair had thought to ascertain whether Frances was at home. They had traversed New York, they had found each other: there was no further function upon earth.

Frances stopped, her hand upon the portiere, and withdrew behind it. The girl broke from the embrace. She stepped back to regain her balance. And then came the first true words.

"Why did you marry her!" said Eliot. Her voice was sharp over her hard breathing.

"You know I couldn't help myself. . . . I couldn't very well marry you, when I was practically engaged before I ever knew you."

"I understand, Ernest." A first softening.

"I loved you the instant I set eyes on you," he went on fiercely.

"I knew it."

"You knew it all along?"

"Of course, you silly!" The girl smiled.

"You darling!" He made to catch her again. They were still standing stiffly, in the middle of the room. Frances crouched behind an inch of curtain.

Eliot stepped back still farther. "Not here! It's unsafe!" She had sobered slightly. And then, she went on: "What's going to happen, Ernest?"

There was a pause.

"Damn Frances!" The man muttered. And Eliot laughed a nervous laugh.

That was the last Frances heard. Softly, she crept into her bedroom; softly, she shut the door and locked it. Deliberately, she closed both windows and drew down the shades—evenly, halfway. . . . And then, carefully smoothing her skirt, she sat down upon the couch and fell to fingering a tassel which marked the corner of its upholstery. She was gazing at the opposite wall—a blank space of light-blue paper. Little threads of white wove through it, a scarce visible design. Her eyes seemed to come forward, till they were

between the wall and herself. She asked herself where she was. Yes, she was sitting on the couch. Her eyes had left her; so it was natural she could not see. She wondered if they would come back. She called out: "Come back." Her mouth was full of a hot liquid—tears. It occurred to her that since she had no eyes, her mouth was weeping. She called again and the word that came forth was: "Mother!" She sat and patted the couch with her moist hands. She must be very careful not to disturb her baby. Her hand went to her breast.

And then, she fell upon her face, forward on the floor—biting into the carpet with angry teeth. When she came back to life, her mind was empty, like a gleaming sky. She felt very cold. She found herself looking at the tear-stained carpet under her face, and wondering whether the stain would last. And then, she raised herself from the floor and said aloud: "What has happened?" Once more, her eyes fastened on the blue wall with the faint white thread. Then, she remembered. She arose. Her head swam and her knees turned in, so she sat down again. She might injure her blessed treasure, if she fell. The thought came to her, faintly, like the memory of a long-forgotten story, that she had just fallen, that she had just found herself upon the floor.

A pain went through her heart—her first pain. Good God!—had she hurt herself? A prayer hovered on her lips. She placed her hands together and asked that no harm had been done to her. And an answer came. She smiled and her eyes brimmed once more, with tears. She placed her head in her open palms and sobbed silently. She seemed to be choosing, seeking something. It was long before she knew what. And then, it occurred to her: something had to be done at once; something cried for accomplishment! What was it? She raised her head and looked up, wide-eyed. She pressed her fingers to her temples. They were beating. That seemed unusual and interested her. And then, it filled her with inexplicable

anguish. She crossed her hands upon her lap.

"I must think!" she spoke aloud. "What is it?"

For a long time, she sat motionless. No sound penetrated into the mournful chamber. She wondered why she was not unhappy. She wondered what she was feeling. She did not seem able to tell what she was feeling. No image formed in her mind. She had the sensation of a vague, cloudy mass above her eyes, full of moist, clinging, evanescent shapes. She saw her mind. It did not seem to hold that strangely compelling thought—the something she knew cried to be done at once.

And then, after a mute space of emptiness, it came—the thought. She sprang to her feet. Her body seemed electric. Her limbs moved as if vitalized with some compelling liquid. Never had she been able to act so quickly. But the need demanded that. It—the treasure—had to be saved. About her, leering walls and poisoned air that laughed; about her, horrors and nightmare! Escape! Escape!

She tore open the drawers of her bureau. She plunged things into a suitcase. She placed a hat upon her head. And then, she unlocked the door. She was afraid of no person. It was the air—the walls—she fled from.

The sitting-room was empty. She felt the presence of the room in her forehead, like a gash; and, once in the hall, she felt it in her back, like a craven blow. And now, she was in the street—she was free! She breathed deep. She clutched her bag. Yes—there was the needed money. She walked swiftly, lithely. And she did not falter till she had reached the Grand Central Station.

Like a stricken creature of the woods. Frances was fleeing to her ancient cover. And now, as she sat crouched in her compartment, pain surged and overwhelmed her. The window was open. There lay the one escape. She could die. She could not live. She rose to blot out her life. And for the first time the pair she had left came be-

fore her mind. She saw Eliot, her beloved, chasing butterflies in a pinafore herself had sewn for her. She felt the warm love of her kisses. She heard the caressing peal of her laughter. And Frances sat down once more in the reeling seat. She had *her* Love under her heart. Eliot had no one only Ernest. Pity came and put hate to shame.

If Frances died, they could never marry. Her suicide would be a blight upon their love. They would forevermore see murder in each other's eyes. No—not that! She would live! She would not rob Eliot of her love! The need to escape, primal and impassioned, was still within her heart. But also, there had come another need—the need to forgive; the need of living so that Eliot—her sister—might at last be happy.

Love and pity swept the red from

Frances' heart. Eliot should be happy! Eliot should never know!

Poor Eliot!

XIV

FRANCES obtained a divorce in her home town of Lee, where she had never given up her legal residence, and from which, now, she never stirred.

Wrenn and Eliot were married in Illinois. And after a prolonged honeymoon, they returned brilliantly to the metropolis, where, for a whole season, they were the pets of Society and the cynosure of admiring eyes.

When they learned that Frances' child had been born dead, Wrenn stole out from their hotel (it was on their trip West) and sent a telegram of condolence. He was constrained to do this secretly, since Eliot did not see the sense of it and feared it might be misconstrued.



The motto of France (after the war): *Liberté, Égalité, Paternité.*



A DOCTOR is headed for success when his women patients begin to say catty things about his wife.



WHEN every woman is married, and loves her husband, there will be peace for bachelors.



A GIRL of sixteen is as much to be feared as one of twenty-one. What she lacks of experience, she makes up for in enthusiasm.

WHAT ELSE COULD HE DO?

By Harold Hersey

AS he opened the iron gate and caught a glimpse of the old house half hidden among the trees, Hemingway actually felt a little afraid. So much depended upon the coming meeting! How would she take the news of his expected marriage? Still, he thought, there was no reason for her to be hurt. Though they had known each other all their lives, no love had ever entered into their close companionship. Hemingway felt, however, that it was only right he should tell Ethel about it. Above all things he did not want to lose her friendship, nor her faith in his high sense of justice.

As he walked up the pathway wondering how he could break the news most gently Ethel came running down the steps of the porch to meet him. He stopped, bewildered. She was beautiful, even lovely, he thought. The task before him became a harder one and he did not feel at ease until they were seated comfortably in the usual corner of the old porch that ran half way around the house. During the evening he sought various ways to bring up the subject, being thoroughly disgusted with himself for failing each time. Then, just as he had gathered up his courage and was going to blurt it all out in a hurried jumble of words, her mother called her and she left him for a moment. Alone, Hemingway had an op-

portunity to think it over. It was becoming very difficult. He lit a cigarette and settled back in his chair.

Suddenly he heard footsteps and, turning, saw Ethel standing by his chair. There was a light in her eyes that defied all description.

"Come with me," she whispered. Surprised at the tension in her manner, he threw away his cigarette and went with her. At the head of the steps she stopped.

"Bob Hemingway," she said softly, "I found this on the floor near the doorway." Slowly her hand came around from behind her. As it opened he saw a ring glittering like a tiny light in the darkness.

"Oh, I . . ." he stammered and looked foolish, fumbling in an empty pocket for the ring he had intended to give to the other girl. There didn't seem to be any way he could explain it.

"Bob, you do love me after all," she cried, throwing her arms around his neck. "You do love me and you meant to surprise me with this ring, didn't you?"

For a moment he hesitated, stunned at her mistake, but the old desire to see justice done no matter at what cost, came over him and he said nothing. Could he tell her after this?

Leaning down in the darkness, he softly kissed her.



YELLOW

By Kenneth Andrews

MRS. KITANO was the first Japanese woman I ever met socially; and I remember the vivid impressions of that first contact with her vibrant personality. I had noticed her early in the evening, and her face had arrested me at once as I saw it against the pale yellow of the screen behind her. It was so strikingly Japanese; yet so un-Japanese. Intelligence, clear and deep, shone from her strong brown eyes. Her skin was fine and pure with a warm golden tinge in it that was beautiful to me even then, fresh from the land of rosy cheeks though I was.

And later when I had succeeded in meeting her, and was rather forcing a perfunctory conversation upon her, I remember thinking that her face was the usual voluptuous, cringing, manservant face of the usual Oriental woman. I was conscious in her of the same saccharine humility and elusiveness that I had found in all the Japanese women with whom I had been thrown, in business or travelling. But it was as though these qualities, which were still there, had been purged and cleaned by the fire of Western Civilization. This clean new strength which the—successful—fusion of the West and East brings was in her eyes. The gold tint in her skin, I recall, seemed fresh and bright. I thought of her as a pure gold ring from which the crusted mould of centuries had been burnished away.

With it, too, was that gentle grace which Japanese reactionaries fear their New Woman—if she ever comes—will lack. I felt that those pitilessly minute webs of mystery, and tradition, and vicious convention had all been unwound, and she had stepped forth a creature

radiantly alive. And all that, of course, added to her mysteriousness and attractiveness and strengthened my desire to know her intimately.

I live in Osaka; and Osaka, as everyone should know, is the second largest city in Japan, second only to Tokyo. It is in the oldest region, and is one of the oldest cities in Japan—sometimes at night I think it must be the oldest city in the world. Yet it is amazingly vigorous, delightfully dusty and noisy; it is split in every direction by crowded canals and rivers over which the bulging houses lean. And often at early evening a peculiarly purple mist rises and wraps itself about the lamp-posts on the bridges. Osaka is vast, tremendously intricate, swarming, stuffed with people, ancient as Nineveh by night, modern as Pittsburgh by day. But its life to me now is a bewildering maze; it is like an enormous pile of tangled tape which throbs and quivers always as it spurts out from the machine.

And there were times, at first, when I was full of dismay, for I could not comprehend it. I was outside. It was a baffling awareness that tremendous, silent things were happening all about me, and that I knew nothing of them, and could know nothing of them. Often during those first months I would walk through the dim crooked streets at night. In front of each doorway a yellow lantern burned. It made a shiny smear on a high blank wall, and behind the wall perhaps, I would catch a glimpse of an uneven blotch in the darkness, which was all I could see of the house. What were they doing in there! All about me, in the darkness, were the treacheries and sins, the loves and vices,

heartbreaks and joys, and cruelties and dreams that merge in a city. But I knew nothing of them; they wanted nothing of me. And all this seasoned the eagerness with which I took advantage of Mrs. Kitano's invitation to tea; and which thereafter drew me to her quiet garden often, unbidden but always welcome. For she felt it all with a fine sympathy, and knew it all, and loved it, and to me the strange eastern, ancient-modern city was, in some peculiar way, all in that personality of hers.

I had been living in the hotel then—a sepulchral white structure that I think of always with a shudder, for I nearly went crazy there. Now and then brightly colored people on the way to Kobe or Kyoto would flit through, but for the most part, I actually had that huge building to myself. On three days of the week a taciturn Frenchman, with the habitual air of a man who is miserable trying to remember a name, came and shared the silent ghost-white dining-room with me. I say shared it; he sat in one dim corner, I in another.

And the lonesomeness of it! The ache of those high still corridors and empty drawing-rooms. That sense of suffocation which came at times when you felt that the mighty alien city was pressing in upon you from every side, was crushing the breath out of you—and at other times a sense of utter isolation, as though you stood in the exact centre of the vast whirlpool while it seethed and plunged about you, forming a hollow vortex in which you stood alone.

So I went to her almost passionately, I think. She revived in me those beautiful trivial things that were almost dead. The energies that those isolated months had frozen in me were released, and surged through my being.

Then came that momentous and absurd day. Mrs. Kitano had received me as usual in her little garden, had greeted me as usual on her knees with her forehead to the ground, and then without warning had said:

"You must not come to see me any more."

I was astonished, naturally; we had grown to be the best of friends, and I asked if I might hear the charges which had led to the sentence.

She laughed in a way that surprised me and I noticed that her lips were white and that her eyes glinted with a certain baffled bitterness. It was very still in the little garden. I was conscious of that feeling of helplessness that came over me at times with her: the feeling all of us have when we are struck with our utter inability to grasp the working of an alien mind.

"That good friend of yours talked to me," she said, quickly. Then she caught her breath sharply and stopped.

"Who?" I asked, thoroughly mystified.

"Dr—What is it? Dearing!"

"Dearing!"

The blue silk kimono shimmered as her shoulders jerked in a very uncharacteristic shrug.

"Dearing!" I repeated in amazement. "What could Dr. Dearing say to you?"

"It doesn't matter, does it? I don't remember. But you must not come to see me any more."

"Why, listen to me!" I laughed nervously, seizing her hands. She took them away with a grace and astonishment that had something dreadful in it. If I had pushed my hand through some priceless canvas depicting the sacred lineaments of a friend's great grandfather I should have felt, I think, precisely as I did then.

"He said people were talking about you," she went on more quietly, raising those strong clear eyes to me—they seemed clearer and browner that day. "He told me that you are not wanted at any of the foreign houses—"

"Missionaries! Please—"

"And he said your business is going badly, because people know of your coming here. Is that true?"

I hesitated.

"Is it?" she urged, and I saw her grow whiter.

"All business is poor, it's due to the situation in Europe."

"He said you would never be able to be friends with nice women in America. Sooner or later, he said, it will get back there. Because of this—what? sweet, frank, natural friendship will me—because I am a Japanese woman!"

I stared at her. Mentally I was grabbing old Dr. Dearing by the coat lapels and was jamming him into the dusty books that lined his study walls. Dr. Dearing was the venerable time-scarred landmark of the city with whom I had lived since leaving the hotel. The loneliness of the place—after the war in Europe had called away the Frenchman—had grown intolerable. Dr. Dearing was a missionary. He regarded my spiritual redemption as a special charge put upon him by the Lord. He had labored with me dutifully from time to time about my friendship with Mrs. Kitano. But the possibility of his actually interfering was something that would never have occurred to me.

"He said," she went on in a moment, "that your Japanese associates in business treat you differently—a familiarity that is insulting."

I said nothing. My associates did treat me differently, but I had attributed it to the anti-American agitation which was just then raging in the yellow press.

"He said that even your closest friends among the foreigners could only be natural to you with an effort; and that every moment you spend with me is known to him—and the others."

That was true also—part of it—but how could I explain it to her! The foreign community in Osaka was very small. Prying into our neighbors' affairs was one of our chief distractions. Everything *every* one did was known to all the others. My foreign friends were mostly English, my sympathies in the great war were German, and in spite of the best will in the world our relations were (momentarily, I was sure) rather strained.

But I was silent and stood awkwardly

before her. I felt that there must be things that I should say, passionate, noble things, but none of them occurred to me—then.

Suddenly Mrs. Kitano sank to her knees. She pressed her hands to her face, trembling. "It's true! Oh, it's true!" she said it wildly, yet in a low voice and she was far from weeping.

I knelt beside her.

"That's absurd—all of it!" I cried in a whisper. "Many men are married to Japanese women, and they are successful and respected."

Again the pale ripple darted across the blue silk shoulders.

"But we are not married," she said.

I clutched the slender, silk-draped arms. "Then we shall be!" I cried.

It was strange. When I had entered her gate that afternoon nothing had been more remote from my mind, or my conception of our relation, than marriage. Yet that cry came from me as though it had been pent up in my breast for years. I had that profoundly distressing sense of doing something that I had done before—though I was sure that I had never proposed to anyone—I seemed to be repeating, aping in every shade of my voice and every gesture of my hands, something I had done before. It seemed unreal, deadening to the faculties, like a page that has been blurred in the printing.

She turned her eyes, radiant with a mist of tears upon me, but I felt that she did not see me.

"He said that you would ask me to marry you," her voice was very low, and quite unnatural. "And he did not need to tell me that marriage would wreck our lives. I knew that. I am sorry you have said it, because what little there might have been left to us—is gone now." She spoke with that maddening impersonal detachment which Orientals can effect.

I was a business man—in steel—and I was not practised in the gentler finesse which the situation plainly demanded. I said, I believe, that I did not see why it was not the beginning instead of the end. I was conscious of the sacrifices,

the great sacrifices there would be on both sides.

But she seemed troubled, almost offended. She put her hands to her ears. "Oh, stop!" she said, coldly. "Must you make our last afternoon—horrible?"

I stopped. But I did not propose that it should be our last afternoon.

Then we decided to do something which was quite unprecedented. And I am sorry I cannot recall who suggested it. I am reasonably certain that she did, but I am striving to write with all justice of that day, which even now seems something apart from the rest of my life.

There is a little village near Osaka called Kiniuji (it looks much worse than it sounds) which is famous for its plum blossoms. It was the season for those delicate flowers, and we decided to go there and see them. That, of course, does not seem to be much of an afternoon for a moderately healthy man; but every one does those things in Japan as a matter of course. But white men do not go with Japanese women.

It is impossible to explain why. One must feel that. Only those who know something of race prejudice can understand it. I suppose, among Americans, the people of California, and the mothers who live in the Southern States understand it best. And Mrs. Kitano and I understood well enough to guard against the menacing consequences.

We were to ride in the same tram-car, but at opposite ends. I was not to speak a word to her or appear to recognize her from the time we left the garden until we returned to it for a little midnight lunch. It seemed easy, rather picturesque, and alluring.

I stole glances at her occasionally on the ride out; and there was a pleasant exhilaration in the thought that between myself and that demure creature, all shimmering blue and gold, there stretched an intimate bond.

For she was a marvelous woman. I say that even now. I liked her fine animation, and the way that gold shade in her skin served to suffuse and blur the

rich color of her cheeks when she was talking excitedly. She was, it has been made evident, I trust, by no means a typical Japanese woman. Her blood was purely Japanese of course, but she herself had little in common with her meek, bland-minded sisters.

There was a time—that day on the tram-car, for instance—when I would have said she had nothing in common with them. In a way she was not Japanese at all. She was of that strong new race that is growing in the Orient, which is Eurasian in the best sense. She had spent her girlhood, and her young womanhood, all her life, indeed, until her marriage, in the home of an English family in Tokyo.

Since her marriage she had lived in that grimly beautiful little house in Osaka, surrounded by the dense, stunted trees, and the weather-stained stone lanterns of the garden. The place, I always thought, recalled her husband, who had been a soldier and had met his death in Manchuria. Her husband had never looked to her for anything but place. He had had others—several tinted little chattels—with whom he sought his pleasures. And I always felt his fretful spirit brooded over the silent, dim garden, as though it resented being torn so prematurely from its gay little world.

And Mrs. Kitano used to say her "best moments" always came when we were together. I am sure our association brought her something for which her vigorous nature famished.

Then I remember how those clouds of faintly lavender blossoms on that afternoon enhanced her frail loveliness. There is a roadway at Kiniuji where the blossom-laden trees lean together and form a low tunnel of flowers. As we walked through that silent place—I followed her at a little distance—I remember how vividly black her hair was, how the light brought white gleams to it in places; her skin seemed almost transparent with the pale color of the blossoms shining through; and the gentle fragrance seemed to come from her.

We took tea in a rude, blackened

arbor of bamboo, and through its black palings was a view of the shallow valley with its gradual sweeps. It was not a bright day, and the blossoms which covered the low hills were little more than lavender mist which deepened here and there to purple. She sat on her heels before the huge bronze brazier whose sides the light struck in red-gold splotches. I sat outside at one of the little tables.

Not a word or look had passed between us.

Then the temptation to speak to her assailed me. We were all alone and I was obsessed with a desire to make the pretty spectacle—personal. I wanted to hear her laughter in the still valley. I had never realized how much of me she satisfied. To sit there away from her, and feel that I must not go to her was maddening. My endurance, all of a sudden, began to slip away. It was unbearable. I rose and walked into the arbor and sat down before her on the floor.

She looked up at me, startled, but said nothing. For a time we avoided each other's eyes and looked at the blossoms.

Then I began: "It's no use trying. I am not going to be miserable all my life. I have decided—"

She stopped me. "Not now," she said. "At home in the garden. We'll go back—as we came." And she rose and walked quickly out of the tea-house.

I left some money, far too much, for the tea-house keeper, and almost ran out into the path. I could not let her out of my sight for an instant; I wanted to tantalize and torture myself while she was thus inaccessible so that the night in the garden might be even more exquisite.

I am writing these words to suggest the sensations that raced through me on that afternoon—though, now, I blush in the act.

Reaching the path I glanced in the direction she must have taken, and stopped. Standing there alone was an American girl. I cannot tell just how I knew she was American, but I did

know it even before she said, "I guess." She was dressed in a white silk waist with clinging sleeves, and there was a skirt of heavy white material and black silk ankles! I stood staring at her in amazement.

"Please excuse me," she said, blushing a little under my direct scrutiny. "I guess I must be lost. I'm with some people from Kyoto—travellers."

"I—I'm afraid I'm staring at you; I'm sorry really—but you're the first American girl I've seen for—it must be years."

She raised her brows in surprise, the faintest sort of surprise. "Oh, you live here?"

"Yes—in Osaka, you'll pass through it on the train, everyone does. I—I know I'm staring at you, but—you understand, I only see pictures (I laughed) of people like you."

She laughed rather uncomfortably. "You haven't seen my party?"

"No; but follow this road, it goes everywhere in Kiniuji; you can't miss them."

"Thank you," she said, making a movement to go.

I stepped aside.

And I stood there staring after her until she disappeared.

The tram-car was just starting when I reached the station. I boarded it mechanically.

* * * * *

At one end sat a very small woman with a thin yellowish face. Her hair was glossy with the sickening rape-seed oil they use; there was some sort of cheap tinsel in her hair, about her waist was a wide sash of gaudy silk—it was Mrs. Kitano!

When we reached the garden (I had not had the courage to look at her once on the return trip) we stood for a moment very awkwardly at the gate. Then she looked at me. I shall never forget the expression in her eyes, nor the mixture of disgust, sorrow, pity and embarrassment it roused in me.

"We have been foolish," I blustered at length. "You were right; I must not come again."

I was aware of that profound detachment once more; but it did not madden me this time, it only relieved me; it made things easier.

"Good-bye, then," she said, simply, and though I tried once or twice, I was never permitted to see her again.

* * * * *

There is one thing more I must add in potential extenuation of myself: whatever old Dr. Dearing was, he was not a liar. Lying was too positive a sin for him. And he swore by all the numerous things he deemed holy that he had never spoken a word to Mrs. Kitano in his life.



THE GRADUATE

By R. F. Vandrake

AUTUMN again!
 I know
 That in the Yard red maple leaves are falling,
 And in my Hall
 The dear lost voices,
 It is I they're calling!

Under the keen north sky,
 Under white Pilgrim clouds,
 Trembles the lilt of that old happiness.

I can but dream.
 My office is so high
 That the whole city lies beneath me, sprawling.
 I can but dream.

If I might go
 The brave old wanderings
 Across October fields, and sniff the slow
 Tingle of wood smoke from some far away—
 If I might grow
 Big with the old, victorious thoughts,
 And with the evening falling,
 Hear in my Hall
 The old lost voices!
 It is I they're calling.



LITTLE EMMA

By Thyra Samter Winslow

WHEN little Emma Hooper, from Black Plains, Iowa, came to Chicago to carve out her fortune, she did not leave behind her a sorrowing family who wondered about the fate of their dear child in the city. Neither did she sneak away from a cruel step-mother who had made life hard, unbearable. Emma's family was quite glad to see her go.

Emma's father was a member of the Knights of Pythias and worked in an overall factory. Her mother, a lazy, whiny woman, kept house, assisted unwillingly and incompetently by such daughters of the house as happened to be out of work. There were three of these daughters besides Emma and they all worked when jobs were not too difficult to get or keep. They spent their spare time trying to get married. There was one son. He was next in age to Emma, who was the second youngest. He smoked cheap cigars and hung around the livery stable and garage. His name was Ralph.

Emma came up to Chicago because she had read and heard a lot about that great city, and because she wanted to get away from Black Plains. She wanted to have a good time. There was nothing doing in Black Plains, and she knew it. She didn't belong to "the crowd," as fashionable society was called there, for she lacked both money and family. She was twenty-two and had gone with the drummers who stayed at the Palace Hotel since she was seventeen.

Emma had been wanting to come to Chicago for a long time, but she didn't have the money. She had been graduated from grade school and finished

at the Black Plains Business College. Her father liked to refer to the fact, but good jobs were few in Black Plains, and Emma had not mastered the details of her profession, such as spelling and punctuation, and so she never could save much.

Emma's money came rather unexpectedly. Clarence Avery got home from college. He was the banker's son and had gone to grade school with Emma. At that time he had suffered from numerous colds in his head and was inclined to lankiness and freckles. At twenty-two he was the average small town college graduate. Clarence belonged to the local society crowd, but after several years of metropolitan living he was bored and disappointed with the gayeties of Black Plains. When he met Emma on the street one day he was agreeably surprised. Emma was small and had dark hair that curled naturally and she knew how to do it up. She and her sisters read the fashion magazines and ordered their clothes from a Chicago mail-order house. She wasn't afraid of a bit of rouge or an eye-brow pencil, either, and she had a neat little figure.

"Hello," said Clarence, "aren't you—why, you couldn't be little Emma Hooper!"

"Well, I just am," said Emma, and they stood and talked for a long time.

Then Clarence began to call and, disobeying all of the rules of Black Plains society, he escorted Emma to the Air-drome and the movies and the most prominent ice cream parlor. This worried Avery, the banker. After he had argued with Clarence with no apparent success, he asked Emma to call at the

bank. There he had made a proposition to her. If Miss Hooper would leave town, over the winter, say, a check for five hundred dollars would belong to her. It was all right, of course, he knew she was a nice girl, not a bit of harm meant or anything like that, but Clarence was young, oh, a fine boy, but young, and if Miss Hooper, now—"

So Emma had five hundred dollars. She didn't like Clarence much, anyhow. He was a silly, conceited thing, who told long tales about himself, and hadn't changed much, in fact, since his sniffy boyhood days.

The Hoopers rejoiced in Emma's luck; gave advice about spending the money and called her a selfish thing, so she gave one hundred dollars to the girls, and then with the rest and a promise to write all about the new styles—Millie, the oldest, had nearly captured a drummer who travelled out of Kansas City—she came up to Chicago.

On the train she figured it all out. Country girls were always important in a large city. She knew that. Didn't she read about them in the 15-cent magazines every day? Always "the girl from the country," "the poor little country girl," sought after, betrayed. Huh! But it sounded interesting, anyway.

"For I'm rather good-looking," mused Emma, modestly, "and if some country girl has got to get betrayed, it might as well be me. I'll read want-ads like the rest and apply for a job where they want girls fresh from the country. I'll try to get a job with one of those nice, grey-haired old Papas, who has a wife that misunderstands him, and some day he'll take me out to dinner, and, well, of course, Clarence wasn't a real conquest, that poor thing, but if I can't find a nice old geezer, well, something is the matter with this girl from the country stuff, that's all."

As the train neared Chicago, a travelling man got on and sat down beside Emma. He tried to flirt with her. He asked her where she came from, and when she said Iowa, he said, "Oh, forget that stuff, kid; you haven't been out

of Chi a week." She wondered why he said it, but it rather pleased her. She and her sisters had rather thought that they kept up with things, watching the fashion books and the movies, but she had been awfully afraid she would look like a rube. She resented the travelling man, though. What kind of a fish did he think she was? Why, even in Black Plains she wouldn't have flirted with a cheap thing like him. He even held one hand over his wedding ring. You couldn't put a thing like that over Emma.

At seven o'clock Emma landed in the city. The lights and noises confused her for a minute, but she liked them then—it was like a carnival. She didn't see a policeman, so she went up to a fairly respectable-looking man and asked where the Y. W. C. A. was. She knew about that and had decided to stay there until she had time to look around. The man looked at her and smiled. "Come, now, girlie, you don't want to go there," he said, "you and I'll have something to eat and then I'll show you a nice place to stay."

"Can you beat it?" said Emma, as she went on, with a toss of her head. "Do they really get away with that stuff in the city? Regular movie stuff. Can you beat it?"

She finally found the Y. W. C. A., answered a number of questions drawled out by a peevish fat woman, and was given a room.

Emma spent two weeks looking around. She visited all of the department stores and watched people. Then she took an inventory of her clothes. They looked better than she had expected. She'd spy around a bit before getting any new clothes. By putting her hat a bit more over her right ear and pulling her hair down over her forehead, she felt she could look as good as the next one.

She went to matinees and discovered restaurants and hotels and tea rooms and little things to wear. She sent home hideously-colored post-cards, saying what a fine time she was having, and sent each of the girls a waist and

her mother a pocketbook. She got tired of the Y. W. C. A. and found a nice, quiet, inexpensive room on the North Side. She liked the city.

She flirted with one man in a tea room, but that was all. She didn't like that sort of thing. She was looking for the old millionaire whose wife didn't understand him and who liked little girls from the country.

Finally, she found that her money was beginning to disappear. By this time she knew the city pretty well, and so she began to look for a position in real earnest. "They all like 'em from the country," she told herself. She answered want-ads, those that asked for "young, inexperienced girls." Maybe that was the kind the rich old men put in. They sounded that way.

Emma did not meet with much success. Usually, the place was filled when she went to apply for it. Other times, men with wearied, blank faces asked her questions—but nothing ever came of them.

For several weeks she looked for a position, somewhat carelessly at first, later with hard earnestness. Was it possible that there were no millionaires hunting for little girls, no positions even? For a week she had a job in a dirty, poorly-ventilated office, where the proprietor chewed tobacco. It was some sort of a fake insurance place. She was fired at the end of the week, but she would have quit anyhow.

She started looking again. It was a tiresome job. She still had over a hundred dollars. "Not a millionaire in sight!" she sighed, as she went to bed. "These magazines are sure putting it over people."

Then she applied for positions by mail. She said that she was all alone in the city, from Iowa. She had more luck. Over half of her letters were answered and she was given personal interviews, but, though she was given interviews, she wasn't given a job. One man, tall, lean, sneering, looked at her for a long time.

"What made you say you were from the country?" he asked.

"I am," said Emma, "Iowa."

"Iowa. Hell!" said the man. "One look is enough to show that the White City is the nearest the country you've ever been."

The White City is a summer amusement park, but Emma didn't even know it. But she had got a hint at the truth.

A week later she met Hallie Summers. They were both applying for the same position—"expert stenographer." Hallie was correctly tailored, perfectly groomed. Her suit of black broadcloth had a bit of fur at the neck, her hat was a smart, stiff felt, trimmed with a single wing. Her white buckskin gloves were immaculate, her buttoned shoes absolutely correct.

Emma gave her name and answered the usual questions. Hallie listened. She was next. As Emma waited for the elevator, Hallie joined her.

"What," said Hallie, "is that gag you pulled about being from Iowa?"

Emma smiled. She liked the looks of Hallie, straight haired, correct looking.

"That," said Emma, "was the honest truth. I am from Iowa, and I don't care who knows it. I don't know a soul in town but a girl I roomed with in the 'Y. W.' She wears cotton stockings and is studying to be a milliner. Why?"

"Well," said Hallie as she led the way into the elevator, "if that's the truth or if it's a stall, you're the worst imitation of a country girl I ever seen."

"Meaning what?"

"Why meaning, of course, my dear child, that you don't look the part. Where did you get those clothes, west side of State Street?"

"Iowa, but they are what most people up here are wearing."

Emma had on a blue and white striped silk, trimmed with a touch of green and she liked it.

"Sure," said Hallie, "that's what's the matter with them."

"I don't quite get you," said Emma. Hallie smiled.

"You poor thing," she said, "I believe you really don't, at that. Come up

to the Clover Tea and I'll buy a sandwich, though I'm not usually that kind of a philanthropist, and we'll talk it over."

Hallie ordered tea and sandwiches and the girls talked. The only girls Emma had talked to in Chicago had been cheap and slow and stupid. She liked Hallie. Hallie was old, that indefinite age around thirty, and she was wise—next to things. She knew Chicago—the way she wanted to know it. She, too, was, in a way, looking for a millionaire, though she had found one and lost him again.

The two girls talked. In five minutes they had bridged the distances more formal people would have spent years over. Emma knew all about Hallie, who wanted thirty dollars a week—and sometimes got it, and Hallie knew about Clarence and the five hundred dollars and the rich old papa who hadn't appeared.

"Now what's the matter with my looks?" asked Emma.

"It's because there isn't, in a way," said Hallie. "You look like the average stenographer, the ten dollar a week kind, that's all. Your clothes are cheap and they are almost in style. Look at all those bits of velvet and buttons."

"It said in the catalogue," said Emma, "that it was the latest thing. I've seen several in this very pattern here."

"Sure you have. That's why you oughtn't to wear it. You may not know it, but people in cities have ideas about how country girls should look, though Heaven knows, they don't look that way. They think that country girls wear gingham and never know that styles change. You can't wear a sun-bonnet very well in the city, but if you want to get away with the country girl stuff you can wear plain things and look—sunbonnety. But rouge and colored shoes—oh, my!"

"I'm pale without rouge, and my eyes—"

"Sure, you're pale. Let your eyes alone. How much money have you left?"

Hallie looked honest.

"Pretty nearly a hundred dollars," said Emma.

Hallie nodded. "You can just about do it for that."

"You mean?"

"Look the part—Iowa."

"Frumpy and back-to-the-farm?"

"Oh, you don't have to overdo it. All you've got to do is to look like a country girl from a city man's viewpoint. It's easy."

On the street, after lunch, Emma pointed to a girl that they passed.

"Like her?"

"Heavens, no. She's just cheap. Halsted or Clark street. Real simplicity, I mean," said Hallie, leading the way to Michigan Avenue. "Cheap clothes are just like furniture—curliques and frills and fancy velvets and silks and things 'in style' come cheapest of all. It's simplicity that costs money. I know the shops, anyhow."

At an exclusive little shop, Hallie picked out a plain little frock. It was dark blue. A tiny white collar was around the neck. In front was a touch of silk embroidery in dull shades and a small flat black bow.

"Old men, the kind you are looking for, fall for this stuff," said Hallie. "They all came from the country—once, though they have forgotten what it looks like. Musical comedy and the magazines have done their worst. They expect frilly white aprons on the farm instead of Mother Hubbards. They want what they think is simplicity, so you may as well give it to them."

Emma bought the little frock. It cost forty dollars. The mail-order silk had cost fifteen.

They bought a hat next, black and floppy and not too big, with a tiny bow and a buckle on one side. It cost more than six of the stylish kind. The shoes were stout and flat heeled and the gloves were grey. The coat was plain and dark and had a wide belt and big pockets.

Hallie came over the next day and helped try things on. Emma's dark hair was parted and drawn into a plain little knot.

"That's the stuff," said Hallie. "To

be a simple country girl you've got to buy the stuff on the Boul' Mich', if you're in Chicago, or Fifth Avenue, if you're in New York. I wish someone would expose this small-town stuff. Why, every town the size of a water bug has at least two stores where the buyers go to Chicago or New York twice a year. With travelling and mail-order houses—huh—it's only city people that don't know the girl from the country disappeared right after the Civil War."

"You've certainly got that straight," said Emma, "why Black Plains people spend all of their time trying to look as if they just came from the city. But if they could see me in Black Plains, dressed like this!"

Under Hallie's directions, Emma answered a few more want ads. She picked out important office buildings. "Go where they are if you want to catch them," said Hallie, and Emma did.

In two days she had found a job. But the owner of the firm was young and happily married and the only other man around the office was a young boy who received fifteen a week. "Nothing doing," said Emma and she left.

"Be careful, the city is full of allurements and pitfalls for country girls," said the happily married man. Emma thanked him for his advice. "I wish I thought so," she said to herself as she left.

The next week she found her real job. It was what she had been looking for. She applied by mail and was told to call. She dressed in her new clothes and left off rouge and powder.

A man of about forty interviewed her. He was the senior partner. He looked old enough to suit Emma. "A nice Papa," thought she. His younger brother was the junior partner—they sold bonds—the firm of Fraylir and Fraylir.

Emma cast down her eyes during the interview and murmured things about being all alone and wanting to succeed. She got the job. Her work was to stay in the reception-room and answer questions when people came in. There was

a little typing and stenography. The wages were twelve dollars.

"The position is an easy one, for the right girl," Frederick Fraylir had said. "Perhaps you don't know what I mean because you are new to the city. I'm glad there are still girls like you, wholesome and sane looking. Now—"

"I can start at once," murmured Emma. She thought she noticed a funny little glint in his eye but she wasn't sure. She knew she could just about live on that twelve dollars—for a while.

"Now," she told herself, "if Fraylir only works out according to specifications. Rich old man, girl from the country, wife who misunderstands—"

At first, Emma didn't know that Frederick Fraylir was married, but she soon deduced the fact from conversation that she heard around the office and over the telephone. The brothers lived together in a big apartment on Lake Shore Drive and there was a Mrs. Fraylir who rang up rather frequently. The brothers called her Belle and she had a slow, drawling voice. "Hope she misunderstands him," thought Emma.

Emma liked her job, as much as she liked any kind of work. She liked Frederick and even his younger brother, Edward, though Edward was colder, most distant. Frederick was friendly, but not friendly enough, for Emma, though she sometimes caught him looking at her when the door of his office was open. The brothers had one large private office together.

In a few months she was raised to fifteen dollars, but she knew that this wouldn't pay for a regular supply of the new kind of simple clothes. She had actually begun to like them. She read magazines in her spare time and wondered how long it would be before Fraylir would arise to the rôle of the devilish city man. At times she was almost on the point of quitting her job—before her clothes wore out—but she always stayed on. She did her work as well as she knew how—really tried, and cast down her eyes when spoken

to and acted the modest and retiring country girl.

"If they could see me act like this in Iowa," she thought, "they'd be wondering if I was copying some new movie star."

But she liked it. It was so quiet and peaceful. There were no quarrels with her sister, no whinings of her mother, no fights between her father and Ralph, no drummers to keep in their places.

Several times Mrs. Fraylir called. She was tall and stately and dignified. "Cold as ice," thought Emma, "just the kind to misunderstand a husband." She dropped her eyes when she answered Mrs. Fraylir's questions. "No use letting her suspect I'm even human. They make trouble enough—these wives."

Then Frederick asked her out to dinner. The suddenness of the invitation almost staggered her. It had been a rainy day and the evening was disagreeably cold and damp. She was putting on her simple hat and wondering if she could buy another one soon. It was getting a bit shabby.

"Miss Hooper," he said, "may I—will you come to dinner with me? I have to return to the office and look over these new papers. It's a bit unusual, I know, but if you don't mind, it might be a change for you. I thought—"

He actually seemed embarrassed—and he had grey hair and was getting old!

They went to a cozy, quiet restaurant. Fraylir ordered a simple, hearty meal. Emma put on her best I'm-all-alone-in-the-city manner. But pretty soon she began telling him her real impressions of the city and she was surprised to find that he seemed to enjoy them. He had a lot more sense than any other man she had ever known.

Half way through the meal a well-dressed young couple came into the restaurant. As they passed, Fraylir spoke to them. Emma was introduced, under her real name, as Fraylir's stenographer, and at Fraylir's invitation, the couple sat down at their table. Emma didn't know things were ever done that way

at all. The young couple didn't even seem surprised. Emma liked to hear them talk, so quiet and well bred and clever. Emma was careful what she said. When Fraylir smiled his approval at her, it made her quite happy. "What kind of a fish am I getting to be?" she asked herself that night when she got home.

After that there were dinners and lunches and an occasional visit to the theatre. Emma saw several dramas; she had always limited her theatre going to musical comedy and vaudeville and had scoffed at high-brow stuff. She was surprised to find that she liked them and enjoyed discussing the problems they presented with Fraylir. Fraylir lent her books and she read them at night because she couldn't go around alone very well and didn't enjoy the other men and girls she met—silly things. She and Fraylir went to the Art Museum and even to a couple of private exhibitions and to musicales and she met some interesting people. She liked to talk to Fraylir and tried to learn as much as she could from him. After all, she had missed a lot of things in Black Plains, stopping school at the eighth grade and running around with a bunch of cheap, slangy travelling men.

Winter passed. Spring came. Emma stayed at Fraylir and Fraylir's. She knew there were dozens of millionaires looking for innocent country girls, but the prospect seemed less real and alluring than in the past. She felt pretty well satisfied, somehow. She went without lunches a couple of days and managed to get some new clothes—simple things.

She met Hallie one day, Hallie with a new job and a new friend, more tailored looking than ever.

"How's your millionaire?" asked Hallie.

"Fine," answered Emma, "it was great of you to tell me about clothes and things."

"That's all right," said Hallie, "I see you're sticking to the styles I picked out for you. I hope your millionaire

is the real thing." Emma, for some reason, felt almost insulted. It had been so, well, almost coarse of Hallie.

Then Mrs. Fraylir went away for the summer. Emma learned about it when Mrs. Fraylir talked over the telephone to Edward or Frederick, whichever one happened to be in the office when she rang up.

"Now's the time," thought Emma, "when their wives go away and they realize how misjudged they've been." But she wasn't exactly enthusiastic about it.

Fraylir took her out to dinner and to the summer gardens. She tried to show him how sympathetic she could be. It surprised her to find out that she really meant it. She was almost afraid to use all of the little tricks that she had learned in Black Plains. It didn't seem honest.

Sometimes Edward Fraylir went with them, but usually the two of them were alone.

She got a letter saying that Millie was married—she had finally landed the drummer who travelled out of Kansas City. And Irma, next youngest, was going with a Black Plains boy who kept a cigar store. Emma had to write back that she was still working and she took the answering jokes about her city success without a murmur. After all, there were so many things besides getting a rich Papa!

And then, one night without warning—

Frederick Fraylir and Emma had stayed in the office after the others had gone. There was some work that had to be copied and they were going to have dinner together. As Emma slipped the last page from the typewriter, Frederick bent over her.

"Little girl," he said, "do you know that I care very much for you?" Emma closed her eyes. She was afraid to say anything. Why couldn't things have kept on—the way they were? Her heart was beating rather rapidly. She had never thought about that.

"Don't you care, a little?" Frederick went on. "You must have known, how I felt, all these weeks."

"I don't know what you mean," said Emma. She suddenly remembered that that was the right answer, though she was afraid that she had put it in the wrong place.

"Why, I mean," said Frederick, "that I love you. I've cared for you from the first. It's hard to say—for an old fellow like me. You are so innocent, so sweet. You are so little and alone and unprotected. I love you, I want to—"

Well, so it was over! "What, what about Mrs. Fraylir?" interrupted Emma. Mrs. Fraylir had never been brought into their conversation before. The words seem to choke Emma a little.

"Why, dear, she likes you too. She told Edward that as long as I felt this way, she hoped you liked me. She wanted to talk to you when she came to the office, but she was afraid she'd say the wrong thing, as long as I hadn't said anything to you. I know you'll like her, though. Edward and she will be glad they won't have to bother with me, I guess. Ever since they've been married, over seven years, I've lived with them. They said they wanted me, but I guess they'll be glad if—" he paused.

"Ever since they've been married?" repeated Emma, mechanically, "I thought, why I thought—"

Frederick misunderstood her.

"Oh, yes," he said, "seven years, and I'd like a home of my own. We can be married whenever you say the word, if you love me a little and I'm not too old. I've wanted to tell you for a long time, wanted to offer you a real home, wanted you to stop work, but you were so young, so unaccustomed to the world. I wanted you to know me and like me a little first, so that I wouldn't frighten you when I proposed. You're the kind of a girl I've always been looking for, a simple, small-town girl with pure thoughts about things. You'll marry me, won't you, dear?"

And Emma, quite overcome, put her head on his shoulder and wept a little and said she thought she would. After all, she was all alone in the city and only a little country girl.

THE MANNEQUIN

By Seumas Le Chat

ALL silver mirrors reflect a pearl-skinned gold-haired girl who trips to and fro before the gray velvet hangings. . . . Her dress, in its exaggerations of delicacy and audacious pastelizing, suggests a masquerade of the Eighteenth Century. . . . It seems to conceal piquancy in a nebulosity of vision, as though you should discover Puck hidden in the froth of a wave. . . . Somewhere there is a hint of motley in a mist, of a cloud in a carnival. . . . Here, a scallop has surged into a smoke-puff, there a frill has foamed into a billow, . . . what might have been a peak has jested itself into ethereal excess; the ghost of a pompon has blossomed in shadowy undulations. . . . That delicious faintness of pearl-pink and shell-pearl might be the parti-coloured livery of some young merman jester. . . .

The dress seems to laugh round the pearl-and-gold child in an ecstasy of

bouffante evanescence. Watch her as she flutters between the mirrors. Folly fainting in rose-petals! Columbine wrapped in the dawn-mist! Pierrette in sea-foam instead of starch! She seems the apotheosis of the butterfly whose wings are artificially powdered and who has slept in the scented patch-box. . . . She is Venus arising from the paintpot of Conder. . . . The new moon slightly rouged that she may be allowed in one of Watteau's landscapes. . . . A fairy smiling through a bubble blown by a demi-mondaine out of moonshine and milk!

. . . . A bubble! Soon to be burst, alas! by the ample contours of the red-faced matron who sits watching heavily on a gray velvet couch. . . . She is a woman who has gathered obesity while rolling in the money of a husband who "likes to see her dressed in something fluffy."



THERE are two kinds of women that soon grow tiresome, those who love you, and those who love their husbands.



A WOMAN whose husband thinks she loves him for himself alone is clever enough to be dangerous.



I FILL THIS CUP

By James Oppenheim

IF you are a Prohibitionist, you will pardon Colonel Trotter for drinking. He lost no less than half a leg in the Battle of Petersburg, serving his country: and, for every drop of blood he spilt, possibly he deserved a quart of spirits. At any rate he fell into his habits before the soda-fountain was invented.

Of course, if you yourself imbibe, then Colonel Trotter needs no defense. You will understand the white-haired old warrior. . . .

As a last gift to his children and grandchildren Colonel Trotter was having his portrait painted. His face was the least important part of that portrait: the most important was the missing leg, the vacancy of which occupied a great slice of the foreground. Next to that leglessness came his tattered uniform, with its bullet holes, blood stains, torn-off buttons, frayed epaulets, and medals. After that, his long, glossy white hair, over his shoulders. Last, and least, but loveliest, his face. . . .

His face could have been used as an argument against Prohibition. It had all the fierce benevolence of rum and Benedictine: stinging, fiery, but warming and soothing. There were creases around the mouth: the nose protruded; the blue eyes were full of fire; the forehead was gloriously wrinkled. And against a background of the American flag, this face was a veritable war-relic; as rousing as the strains of "Dixie" or "John Brown's Body."

It must be confessed that Merivale, the young painter, had made a few patriotic alterations in the Colonel's physiognomy. For instance, he left out the red blossoms on the nose, and made

it less bulbous. He added a little lightning to the eyes. He omitted the yellow tobacco juice on the corners of the heavy moustache.

For Merivale loved the old fellow and the old fellow loved Merivale. They lived on opposite sides of Washington Square: the green, tree-umbrellad Park between them. Naturally Merivale, who was an artist, lived on the South Side, which is Art, Poverty, North Light, and Bohemia: whereas the Trotters, of Old New York, lived, and for fifty, no, sixty, years had lived, in one of those neat, sweet red brick houses on the North Side which seem a row out of a toy town. There lived the Trotters, as of old: for the North Side was Aristocracy, Unostentatious Americanism, Southern Exposure, and Landed Respectability.

Between these two, of summer nights, swarmed a parkful of Italian immigrants, Irish voters and women, and swarms of new members of the Melting Pot.

The Colonel had his habits. One was to pay his personal regards to the fountain in the center of the Square whenever he went to Merivale to pose. He paid this tribute to the beauty of water, as if he knew that all life sprang originally from the sea. And on the way back he glorified liquor with the red guidon of his nose, as if he realized that though we sprang from water we have achieved civilization. Then, when the Colonel reached the northwest corner of the Park, he sat down of pleasant nights, to gather his wits, gain control over his faculties, and teach his one and sole foot to walk straight. For it was

just as well to cross the old Trotter threshold like a gentleman.

He had a favorite bench, which faced his dwelling. Here he could watch the lights go out one by one: a fascinating occupation. When they went out, he went in. That is all there was to it: a quaint crotchet of the Colonel's.

Another quaint device was to pose only in the evening. That meant that Merivale had to correct the coloring the next morning: yet Merivale did not object. Not that he loved liquor less, and the Colonel more—but, well, *these artists!* And art is long, and ill-paid. Very long, sometimes. The Colonel's portrait had been in process for well over a year: and the Colonel paid Merivale by the week: and furnished the drinks. Why complain, then?

The only complaint possible was that the Colonel went a bit beyond art. He paid Merivale not only for laying on paint, but also for lending an ear. Liquor made this easier: the weekly check kept Merivale patient: so he let the Colonel talk.

Glass in hand, in full uniform, his foot on the floor, and his wooden stump pointed horizontally, he poured forth torrents of eloquence. Wartime was relived with all its loves and its battles, until the night wore, and Merivale was drunk. The Colonel did not spare his friend. Had he not, possibly, if the truth must be told, hired the artist for just this purpose? For he had arrived at the stage where only money could purchase a listener. His own family had seceded long ago. They had learned to tell his stories better than he could.

As the summer night grew silent, the Colonel grew voluble: as it cooled, he warmed.

"Ah, Merry, my boy," he said, "you should have lived in this Square in '60, in '61. . . . Woman had Beauty then, and Sweetness. Man was Chivalrous." He raised his glass:

"I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone.
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon."

"There's Song for you: and Sentiment. On Summer Evenings no motor-horn honked; no arc-light sputtered: but the lamps were dim, and the stars bright: and in the shadows, on the low stoops, sat the girls in their soft white dresses, and their hair in ringlets. No glee club marched across the Park singing ragtime: but out of some open window floated the sweet strains of 'Believe Me, if All Those Endearing Young Charms.' No semi-nude maidens tangoed and fox-trotted. Ah, no, I danced the minuet with the leg I have right here and the leg I gave my Country. No Sicilian Black Handers breast-fed their babies in the public gaze: but lady and gentleman strolled arm-in-arm under the trees, sighing and conversing gently. Old Friends to Wear, Old Shoes to Love, Old—the rest is familiar to you, Merry, I am sure.

"Ah," sighed the Colonel, as he wiped away a tear with his pocket handkerchief. "This country is Ruined. Love is Deceased. Sentiment has to Step Lively or Central cuts you off. Sweetness and Light have been Sandbagged by Bernard Shaw. Chivalry is Crushed in the Subway: and the Music of the Tender Passion has been Syncopated by Irving Berlin. Where are the Girls of Yesteryear? I drink, Mary, to you."

He drank. Then refilled his glass.

"Mary, I drink to you again." He drank.

Then he gazed wistfully at Merivale.

"Can you guess, Merry, why I drink to Her twice?"

"Eh! What?" stuttered Merivale.

"I knew you would be interested," said the Colonel. "This is the Anniversary of the Day."

"The Day?" echoed Merivale sleepily.

"The Day—the Night—when we plighted our Troth in this very Park here: yes, sir, on the very Spot where stands my Favorite Bench. It was a Night, my boy, of Summer, and the Stars. There was Soft Laughter and Strains of Song. Many a Heart beat fondly: many a Rapturous Word was sighed out into the listening air. I was young, and in love. Mary had Beauty:

she had Grace: her face was oval, sir, tinted with Rose-Leaf: a Rose-Bud mouth: and laughing brown eyes. She lived four doors from me, sir: and I visited on her Stoop. But, the course of true love—" He waved his hand, "even before I had Declared Myself, we Quarreled. A trivial cause, my boy. The Propriety of Dancing!"

He paused, and Merivale started. He had a faint feeling that it was time to stop the phonograph: for this particular record had been run off so often that he knew it better than the Lord's Prayer.

"Ah," sighed the Colonel, "the Folly and Rashness of Youth. I parted from her in Anger. I meditated Suicide. Then I hit on a Ruse. You see my Brother and I were alone in the House: it being summer, and my people away Traveling. I said to myself: I will Break her Heart. I will show her that she has Driven her lover to the Desperation of leaving his Family Mansion. So I went to a Real Estate Agent, and got a To-Let sign, and nailed it up on our front door. That evening I sat alone on the stoop, smoking. And out of the corner of my eye I watched Her stoop. What would she do? I might have known. . . . She sat staring wistfully toward me: a Rose in her Hair: a Rose for me. I made no Sign. Timidly then she arose, and came to the Pavement, and walked down the street to me. She paused: I lifted my hat. 'Good Evening,' she sighed sadly. 'Good evening,' I rejoined. 'I was tired of sitting still,' she said. 'Oh,' I murmured, 'did you want to walk?' 'Did you?' she asked. . . .

"I went down to her side. We did not look at each other, but went side by side into the Park. She stopped: I stopped. She sat down: I sat beside her. We were silent. Then her voice was Melody of Heaven.

"'Ashton.'

"'Yes, Mary.'

"'Are you going to move?'

"'Yes, Mary.'

"'Why?'

"'You know why.'

"'But I don't believe in dancing,' she said.

"'And I do.'

"'It's wicked.'

"'It's refined.'

"'Once more we were silent. Such is Love, Merry. . . .

"'Ashton,' she murmured.

"'Yes, Mary.'

"'We mustn't quarrel. Good friends mustn't quarrel.'

"'No. Good friends mustn't.'

"'Am I not your friend?'

"'I had always considered you so,' I said.

"'And nothing more?' she asked.

"'Much more.'

"'But you'd better move,' she said hastily. 'You will be happier when you haven't me around to quarrel with you.'

"'It's you that will be happier.'

"'Ashton,' she cried.

"'What, Mary?'

"'You . . . you've torn the heart out of my breast!'

"'Darling! My Darling!'

"'Beloved!'

"Ah, my boy, that was love. That was Plighting one's Troth. And you, Mary," again he wiped his eyes, and drained his glass, "wherever you are, I drink to you: I drink to your Modesty, your Pure Womanhood, your Love. . . . Many a year, Merry, has she Slept Beneath the Violets: a Woman of the Age when Women were Womanly. She is gone: and an Upstart Age Blows its Horns around us!"

As if to illustrate this, he blew his nose loudly. . . . Merivale awoke again: but the Colonel at once proceeded to put him to sleep.

"An Upstart Age! What is Woman now? A Man of Skirts: my Granddaughter. She may have Beauty; but it's Tanned in the Sun. She's Muscular, not Musical. She swims, plays tennis, and reads the Newspaper, sir. And Romance? Sentiment? Reverence for Age? 'Granddaddy,' she says to me, 'can the chatter.' There is no Tender Passion in her Heart. She labels me 'Has-Been,' she directs me to the Dis-

card. And when I speak of Our Splendid War, a theme to fire the Heart of Man: she tells me she is too busy estimating the relative values of proteins and fats to listen to me. Ah, Sentiment! What's Sentiment and the Honor of Gray Hairs to her? She's only interested in Art, and Social Work, and Sport, and Votes for Women, and Socialism. No imagination: no beauty: no Sweetness and Light. . . . The best she can think of is that I should get a Cork Leg. That is to say: Conceal my Glory. There's Patriotism for you. . . .

"Aye, Merivale, my boy," he sighed, "so it goes. I am a Lonely Man. I have only one old friend: John Barleycorn. I am In the Way. Not Wanted. An Outcast. . . . Yet in the Invisible Kingdom waits One for Me:

"A woman, of her gentle sex,
The seeming paragon."

A Woman of a Different Time: a Woman of an Age when there was Art and Heart, when Chivalry knelt down, and Beauty Lifted Up. . . . The bottle is Empty."

It was. It was time to go home.

Now it was one of the Colonel's particular hobbies to go home in full uniform. Not that he cared especially to parade before the grandstand of the unapplauding stars: nor yet even that he wanted to overawe the policeman on the beat. The policeman knew him of old, and kept his distance. If there were stories to be told, he preferred his own brand. No: the simple fact was that Merivale was unfit for valety, and the Colonel helpless. So he thumped away, bump, bump, bump, down the dark and creaking stairs, and so out into the cool and sobering night air. . . .

The distance seemed immense: the arc-lights among the trees far off: and Fifth Avenue running North from the Arch with double strings of pendant lamps appeared as remote as the silent heavens. Slowly the Colonel hobbled along, supporting himself on his cane. . . . So he passed the fountain: so he walked down his well-worn path: so he came to his bench and sank upon it.

"Aye! Oh!" he sighed rheumatically.

Now, on this night he was strangely loth to go in. For not only was his mind addled with drink, the fumes of which gave him visions of the night, evoking voices from the silence, whispers and strange visitings of memory: but he felt deeply the fact that it was the anniversary of that quaint and old-time love-scene. . . . So he sat there pathetically, a shattered wreck still holding a treasure of memory, leaning his chin on his cane, and marking the pavement where Mary had come down to get him. He reconstructed the scene: he opened and shut his eyes: and it became realer and realer to him. . . .

He was young again: he was on his stoop. He was actually back in the old times, re-living every detail, as the old so often do.

It seemed to him as if he smelt the fragrance of the rose in her hair: almost as if an invisible and scarcely perceptible hand were laid on his shoulder. He started. To-night, surely, he had imbibed more than his usual potion: he was dangerously near to "seeing things."

There were no lights in his house, and the street was unusually deserted. The night must be very late. Soon they would send for him, as once before they had done near dawn. . . . Ah, bitter house! lonely and crabbed old age that has no foothold in life! Surely he were better dead and gone: better with Mary: than here where he was not wanted. . . .

Again the vision swam before him: that perfect summer night, that fragrance. . . . And as he raised his head he saw quite distinctly in the lamp-light the figure of himself as he was That Day issue forth from his house. And the figure stood there on the stoop, looking up the street. . . .

Ah, all so real! The same spindling trousers, the long-tailed coat, the high hat, the side whiskers: even the cane under the arm. . . .

He stared open-mouthed. Was it liquor, or was it so? He looked around

weakly, his poor old heart beating an alarm. . . .

"Ha!" he thought, "they warned me to stop drinking. . . . And yet, if drink can produce such dreams—"

He rubbed his eyes; he shook himself, trying to throw off the delirious images of his fuming brain. . . . But the figure remained there on his stoop.

He watched, fascinated; then he began to gasp strangely, and a great hard sob worked its way up his breast to his mouth. For shining in the lamplight came a young girl of that buried past, in strange contrast with the electric arc burning above her: she came tripping softly and hesitantly. . . . Item by item, he saw her, the love of his youth: the quaint slippers, the little pantaloons, the many-scalloped skirt, the ringlets down her cheeks.

"I'm dying," he thought.

He shut his eyes, afraid it was so. . . . He waited: then he looked. The two figures were crossing the street, advancing upon him. He sat rooted to the bench. There was no mistaking now: was that not a Rose in her hair? And those gloves with bare fingers! And that manner of walking! He shivered, drew back, wrestling within.

And now they sat beside him on the bench, just as if he were not there. . . .

Then his ears heard and his eyes saw—such miracle as comes only in dreams. . . .

Melody of that voice!

"Ashton."

Sadness of his!

"Yes, Mary!"

"Are you . . . are you *really* going to move?"

"I am."

"Why?"

"Don't you know why?"

Echoes! echoes! It came almost word for word!

"But I don't believe in dancing," she said.

"I do."

"It's wicked."

"It's refined."

They were silent: then she sighed.

"Ashton."

"Yes, Mary. . . ."

"Good friends mustn't quarrel."

"No. *Good* friends mustn't."

"Am I not your friend?"

"I have considered you so," he said.

"And . . . and nothing more?"

"Ah, much more."

"But I think you had better move," she burst out. "You will be happier when you haven't me to quarrel with."

"You will be happier."

"Ashton!"

"Yes, Mary."

"You . . ." her cry rose poignantly, "oh, you've torn the heart out of my breast."

"Darling! My darling!"

"Beloved!"

They clasped: they kissed. . . . They rose slowly; they started away. . . .

The Colonel sprang up on his cane. His brain was wild, but sober. His heart was bursting.

"Stop!" he cried. "Stop!"

They turned. . . .

Mary came up to him, put her cool arms around his neck and kissed him.

"Granddaddy, dear," she murmured. "Just to show you that Teddy and I remembered."

He stood silent, though his lips moved.

"But, Granddaddy, you don't mind? I know it's rank sentimentality, and horribly romantic—but Teddy and I just love each other, and we're engaged, and we thought . . . we thought . . . you'd like to know that we hadn't forgotten This is the Day."

The Colonel wept and laughed.

"Am I sober then?" he asked.

"Sober?"

"But I thought," he muttered feebly, "that the Modern Woman . . ."

"Can the chatter, Granddaddy!" she laughed.

"Oh! my darling!" he cried, and kissed her.

Then, hesitatingly, he put a test question to Teddy:

"Do you take seltzer straight—or with—?"

And behold, not even that had changed.

CHILDREN OF APOLLO

By William Drayham

TWO street minstrels, a youth with a crooning 'cello and a girl strumming a guitar, were trying to penetrate the rattle of trucks and trolleys with lyric strains. Her face was oval, dreamy; his oval, but alert; there was the family resemblance of children of Apollo. Their clothes bespoke poverty without want, their eyes pathos without tragedy. The youth often turned toward his companion, now with a smile of encouragement, now with a glance of solicitude.

Their concert ended, the 'cellist approached his rapidly dissolving audience, hat in hand. A motherly woman rummaged in her purse.

"Your sister?" she asked.

"Yes, Madame," he answered, with an affectionate glance at the girl. The matron beamed and gave him fifty cents.

I followed as they sauntered to their next post, charmed by the music and touched by the brother's devotion. The repertoire again ended, and largess modestly sought, a young, handsomely gowned woman opened her reticule.

"Your sweetheart?" she murmured, to the boy.

His eyes lighted up, and with an adoring gaze at his sister of a few moments before, he replied:

"Yes, Miss."

With a glowing smile she gave him a dollar, and went away with a love-song in her eyes.

As the musicians moved on I overtook them. "Pardon a meddler's curiosity," I pleaded. "I heard what you told the two women. Really, now, which is she, your sister or sweetheart?"

The youth glanced at me keenly. "One must live," he said, "and the world pays the artist only for romance. . . . She is my wife."

I glanced at the girl's hands. Tenderly she drew out a silken cord at her throat and revealed, suspended at the end, a wedding ring. The minstrels looked at each other with happy smiles. I gave them two dollars.

"If only more people would pay for truth," the little wife sighed, dropping the ring back into its nest.



IT is characteristic of young men to believe that all women are angels. It is also characteristic of young men not to go to church.



IN INDIANA

By Edmund Karlyle

FOR three and twenty years, or the sum of his days, Alfred Lawrence had lived opposite a great author. Each afternoon at four o'clock he saw the great man leave his door and swagger by with that irresistible grace and charm and cane great authors wear. He noticed the salutations passed in deference by distinguished men and marked the great man's courtly bow. He watched the common herd turning to stare at the celebrity, nudging each other and whispering, "There he goes!" as though it were a white mouse with pink eyes, and he enjoyed the great man's notable indifference to it all. Late at night Alfred thrilled as he saw the green lamp glowing in the author's study, signifying that new work was then and there distilling from the holy cloud which hovered round his brow. By day he read what the great man's publishers cast upon the waters of journalism—about his association with dignitaries and lights of the stage, or about the fabulous sums paid to him for serial rights and royalties. Alfred even read the novels which came from the great man's hand.

And so, at length, an ambition to be literary sprouted and grew and finally burst into flower, and clerking in the Lawrence Ladder Works, where, after his father's death, he had begun at the proverbial foot with assurance of rising to the supreme rung, became wholly distasteful to him. One day he quit the "world of business" in order to "devote all his time to literature," and to "earn his living with his pen." And from this time his doting mother, out of her neat income from the factory, supported him in comfort.

Days turned into weeks, weeks into months, and the bright diurnal sun be-took himself about the earth, witnessing two drawn blinds each morning, two literary strollers each four o'clock, and hearing from his friend, the moon, of two green lamps ablink far into each night. No new star joined the galaxy in the magazines, however. This was "not due to lack of quality in Alfred's stories," declared his mother, "but because he had no reputation as yet." And further, she exclaimed with a glance across the street, that Alfred could write just as well as *some* whose success was purchased in these evil days through reputation alone, though why some people had a reputation, she cried, it puzzled her to comprehend! She even discontinued her time-honored subscription to a certain magazine because of its editorial policy with regard to certain new contributions to American literature. In the meantime Alfred blandly smiled and scrawled leisurely, well assured of the bounteous future.

Then as suddenly and unaccountably as the storms in spring a passionate determination to get something published forthwith seized him. Mrs. Lawrence, to her alarm, noticed a change in him so fraught with panickiness that he profaned his manuscript one moment and perused it almost sobbingly the next. Alfred's friends at the club marked his absence from the festive board, and some said that the drowsy blue eyes of the great author's niece were not wholly unrelated to his new *modus vivendi*, an implication which he denied briskly when taxed with it later. Be that as it may, he closeted himself fe-

verishly with manuscript for a week—even missing an occasional walk at the sacred hour of four—and ultimately brought forth into the light of day his great production, his masterpiece, the story that was to make him famous. He had put his best into it, he declared—had written it two times over and revised it thrice. His whole being was wrought into its wondrous workmanship! It was a tragedy, of course, a cold-grief kind of tragedy, grim with the brutality of Kipling, yet gently lighted with the humor of O. Henry.

And to the feast of soul which the reading of this story by its own author would be, Mrs. Lawrence invited no less a personage than the great neighbor himself.

He came for the ordeal with his cane and god-like manner, his smile unwrapped for Alfred's encouragement and Mrs. Lawrence's delight. He spoke of those far days when he was but a "hopeful beginner," and he displayed his large jaw and small forehead in a proportion which suggested that popular literature is not so much a fine art as a fine business.

"I think Alfred's story is just fine!" cried Mrs. Lawrence in her penetrating voice. "And I want to watch your face while he reads it to you!"

All was suspense as Alfred dropped into the easy chair by the lamp to read his "little tragedy of daily life." He draped his handsome body gracefully upon the chair and read with a glow of satisfaction arching his eyebrows now and then, occasionally drooping his mouth in imitation of the great man himself, and always sounding his words with tenderness. Alfred was a prepossessing youth, with features chiseled finely in the smoothest flesh. His hair and eyes were a raven black and his lips as red and trim as if laid upon his mouth with a brush. It would seem likely that drowsy eyes might start and lose their languor in such a presence. Handsome and new and untouched he was, for he had not come to know life through the shock of actual contact, but rather through the bitter report of

Kipling, the theatrical hearsay of O. Henry, and the prismatic panorama of the great man across the street.

There was a moment of silence, his mother ceased to speak and creak the piano stool on which she sat a-tiptoe, the great man rolled his eyes upward, and Alfred, wetting his lips, began as follows:

"In that strange quarter of the modern world known as old New York, on a snuffy, snowy evening in early midwinter, Sady Grady, a lovelorn, lonely creature, counted over her needed cash by the last glow of the setting sun and found that there remained to her but the princely sum of twenty-eight cents."

Gently and sweetly, in a melodious way, Alfred continued for forty-five minutes. The music of his intonation and a chanting of his cadences was most soothing to the weary, so much so that the great man blinked occasionally, found his eyes losing their focus and his lids feeling like windows which have dropped their balance-weights and must be upheld by muscular devotion. At last the full horror of the tale was accomplished. Alfred let fall the manuscript languidly but modestly to his lap, hoping for a storm of approval though nerved to depreciate it. The great man looked up with a start, as if the conclusion had hardly been expected, or even hoped for so soon, then fumbled for an idea, refocused his eyes with a blink, realized the awful responsibility upon him and said with a stammer, "Yes—ah—I would say, Alfred, that that's almost *good*!"

Then he fell dismally silent, resigning himself to what is perhaps the most "undramatic" side of a great author's life; and Mrs. Lawrence took advantage of the lull.

"I think it's just fine!" she exclaimed in her armor-penetrating tone. "I've read lots worse in the magazines!"

Alfred said that of course it was only a "second draft," and though he *had* spent many days upon it he knew it could be improved in places. In fact in an extremely self-effacing manner he remarked to the great author, "I would

appreciate it very much indeed if you would point out where it could be improved."

Mrs. Lawrence interrupted severely to say she voted to leave it as it was. Wasn't the story good enough "to go," she demanded, and didn't they "believe in leaving well enough alone," she exclaimed, "at any cost!" Alfred, with a bored stare, waited for the echoes to roll away and then asked the great man if he wouldn't "just as soon" grant him the light of his critical intellect, promising that if it would only shed its radiance over the details of his work he would "appreciate it immensely," that there was no one who could write well to whom he could appeal in his emergency anyway, and that, in fact, the great man's style was well-nigh perfect, entitling him to an immortal seat between De Maupassant and O. Henry. The last observation, though slightly irrelevant, seemed to win the day, for the celebrity consented at this point and urged Alfred to begin rereading at once. So the youth unfurled his first resounding sentence:

"In that strange quarter of the modern world known as old New York, on a sniffly, snowy evening in early midwinter, Sady Grady, a lovelorn, lonely creature, counted over her needed cash by the last glow of the setting sun and found that there remained to her but the princely sum of twenty-eight cents."

"Now, if you will let me make a suggestion," said the great man, "I would advise you to leave out an adjective or two."

Alfred was a bit startled at this, as he had modeled his style in respect to words of attribute on the great man's own. But the latter spoke up, as if to soothe him, "It's a fault all of us have at first, you know, the excessive use of many adjectives. I had it myself."

So Alfred read the sentence over again and expressed the opinion that doubtless the word "early" before "midwinter" could be deleted and the rich effect upon the reader remain unimpaired. The celebrity said "needed" might be left out before the word

"cash," since cash was invariably "that way," and he searched the distance with a pained expression. So Alfred, with an explosive "Oh, of course," sawed the word out.

"Now, you be careful," Mrs. Lawrence cautioned them in a loud voice, "You'll take out all the melodious spirit if you don't look out. It's that minor tone, you know, that so beautifully suggests the tragedy which is coming."

But the great man persisted, notwithstanding and remarked that the word "strange" was a poor word anyway.

"Oh, I used that," said Alfred shrewdly, "to give a note of mystery to the story at the outset. I've noticed how mystifying the tone of your own work always is."

"Yes," said the man of mystery in reply, "but the editor doesn't hanker for that word 'strange.' He meets it rather frequently, I fear."

"Well,—here goes," said Alfred.

"Now read the sentence to me," said the celebrity.

"In that quarter of the modern world known as old New York, on a sniffly, snowy evening in midwinter, Sady Grady, a lovelorn, lonely creature, counted over her cash by the last glow of the setting sun and found that there remained to her but the princely sum of twenty-eight cents."

"I don't exactly like that 'sniffly, snowy evening,'" observed the great man with a sigh. "In fact, I think you out-Webster Webster in the word 'sniffly.'"

"It's a rather striking alliterative phrase, I thought," said Alfred with a tone of disappointment. "I used it to bring home to you the feeling of how you snuffle at such a time."

"Certainly," exclaimed Mrs. Lawrence shrilly. "Of course you snuffle on cold evenings. I think that's just fine!"

"Yes," interposed the great visitor, speaking low in order to suggest a quieter voice in reply. "But don't you see, Mrs. Lawrence, that although the evening is snowy it is not sniffing!"

"No, I don't see," cried Mrs. Law-

rence louder still. "Every one from great to grocery clerk knows you sniffle on a snowy evening!"

"But, mother," said Alfred imploringly, "don't you see there's something wrong there?"

"There is not!" cried Mrs. Lawrence with vehemence. "People sniffle—*sniffle*—on snowy evenings and that's all there is to it. You are simply fixing up the story for the *editor* not for the reader. Do you suppose when I read I ever bother my head over such fine distinctions!"

"Mother," Alfred pleaded, "please don't talk so loud. We can't do literary work by physical force, you know. What we need is quiet and calm for literary atmosphere. Isn't that so?"

The great man said "calm atmosphere" was helpful.

"Well, who's disturbing it?" said Mrs. Lawrence passionately.

"Moreover, *Alfred*," said the great man, turning away with a frown, "you've included too much in that opening sentence. What's your idea?"

"My idea is to do exactly what the short-story manual says, to tell 'who, where, when, and why.'"

"Ah! You don't really have to do all that in the first sentence, I believe."

"Why, no, of course not! Thank you for telling me that," said Alfred. "I'll strike out those beginning clauses. They're too much. And I'll take out that phrase about 'lovelorn' and 'lonely,' too. Also 'sniffly' and 'snowy.'"

Mrs. Lawrence's hands went up in the air and her eyebrows and eyeballs tried to follow in mute exasperation. "Stop!" she shouted. "Stop right now before you ruin it! I won't have it, I tell you! You shan't mutilate that story!"

"But, mother," said Alfred a bit imploringly, "we are only improving it!"

"You're taking out the things that make it sound so well! You're taking out all the *beautiful* phrases!"

"But, mother, don't holler so loudly! How can we do *literary* work with you making so much noise!"

"How?" yelled Mrs. Lawrence

hoarsely. "How?" She sprang to her feet and cried still more furiously, "By your poor mother's leaving the room!" She tramped to the stairway and stamped upward. "By having the mother that is ambitious for you leave the room!"

Alfred and the distinguished guest, as she swept out of sight up the stairway, pleaded in vain throughout the broadside of her bombardment. At the top of the stair she paused a moment and caught sight of the great man imploring in true agony beneath.

"As for you," she shouted, "you are just a meat head!" Then she paused for emphasis, and in satirical confidence *whispered*, "In fact, I could cut a round steak an inch thick off your brains and you'd never miss it!"

Next a door slammed and the house quivered. The two men quivered too, as though the blow had struck upon their raw insides. They returned to the room and fell into chairs.

After a long time the great man said, as though haunted by one glaring fault in the manuscript worse even than the harrowing he had just endured, "Alfred, I believe I would call the girl merely Sady. You see Grady rhymes with it and sounds poorly."

"That's so," Alfred replied. "I never noticed that before. Funny how you miss those things in your own work, isn't it? But do you know, I rather like that name Sady. It's *beautiful*!" And he gazed far away.

"Well, let me hear that sentence as it stands now."

Alfred waded through the revised manuscript a-whisper, then leaned back, arched his brows, wet his lips, and read:

"Sadie had twenty-eight cents."

There was a solemn pause.

"Terse, isn't it?" said the great man.

"Yes, rather incisive," Alfred replied, and dropped into a reverie. After a few moments he remarked, "Well, anyway, we've got that first sentence right at last!"

"Uh-hu."

"By Jove, it certainly is hard to

write, isn't it?" Alfred dreamed for a few minutes, then exclaimed, "I've got something to tell you—in *confidence*."

"What is it?" yawned the great man. "I'm engaged!"

The celebrity lifted his brow very high in undoubted congratulation.

"Yes, sir," continued Alfred, with a solemn air. "It's Sadie McGowan. "What's more, just as soon as my lit-

erary work begins to pay I'm going to buy me an artistic little home, you know, and marry her."

Then, at the great man's suggestion, they sought the fresh air of the night, first selecting their canes to companion them. And as they walked gracefully down the street Alfred talked of that sweetest breath of fame which is an appreciative woman's love.



IN AFTER YEARS

By Reginald Wright Kauffman

YOUR lips met mine so lightly
That golden night in May,
I said: "What comes so brightly
Will soonest fade away."

Alas, before the morrow
I learned it was not true:
He said: "Come in" to Sorrow
Who said "Good-bye" to you!

No other lips can ever
Mean quite what your lips meant
At that farewell, and never
Another kiss content.

No man but some day learns it
And loves the hid regret;
The fire that leaps and burns it
His heart cannot forget.

Whatever else he misses,
Those memories remain:
*The lighter fall the kisses,
The longer lasts the pain.*



CONFESSIONS

By Margery Land Mason

I HATE my husband. For years I have posed as the happy wife of a man whom I do not love. I married him because I was poor and needed the money, and because everybody told me I was wonderfully clever to have won such a prize. I hate his very virtues. I could scream when simpering women tell me that "he's such a splendid man."

I hate him because I'm an aristocrat and he's not. His mother talks with a nasal twang, and his sister mixes her pronouns and says "come" when she should say "came." His mother loves to bake bread and his father drops food on his shirt-front. I blame him for these things, though I suppose he couldn't very well choose his family.

The realization that he is a builder in his community, and a possessor of the sterling qualities of sincerity, honesty,

and generosity doesn't change my feeling for him, though I really wish it could.

I hate the wave of his hair, the lines in his face, the set of his shoulders.

His "idealism" gets on my nerves because it gives him an "I-am-better-than-thou" attitude towards men who still have a little live blood in their veins, and who aren't so convention-ridden that they think looking at a woman is a crime.

Because I golf, swim, bowl, and dance better than he does, and because I don't think it's immoral for a woman to smoke, and he does, I hate him. I would leave him if he were not regarded as such a paragon of virtue and I would be considered a queer woman for doing so. And then, too, I haven't any money. I pretend to love him passionately, but I hate my husband.



CANONIZATION

By Pietra Van Brunt

THE First Rogue met the First Fool and said:

"All is All and in-ALL! Nothing is nothing, now and forever; ergo: let there be light."

The First Fool saw the Second Fool and said:

"I have met a Prophet!"



MAKING ERNEST APPRECIATIVE

By Harold de Polo

MOST of the women conceded that young Ernest Travers *was* awfully sweet. He danced divinely; he did the unimportant little things so nicely; he gave such fascinating parties; he was so jolly about lugging them off in the afternoons for a spin and some trotting; and he was so *sane* for a married person of twenty-three who had enjoyed—it's the accepted word, you know—that state for just a bit less than two years! . . . Perhaps they didn't think it necessary to mention his ardent—if indiscriminate—lovmaking. It was enough to say that he *was* awfully sweet. That is, until Mrs. Heverill entered the lists. Then they universally and not too softly conceded that he was making a plain idiot of himself! . . .

She had lengthened the stay at her summer place until late in the fall, and Ernest didn't see her until one of the early winter dances at the Country Club. Before that, he'd been dancing fairly evenly with the widows and divorcees and open-for-sympathy married women—a boy of his age who's been married the time he was *always* runs to that type—but the moment he met Judith Heverill it was different. It was different, indeed, from the moment she had answered his "Charmed" with "What a perfectly heavenly blond" and he had seen the mischief in her green eyes and proceeded to essay the monopolization of her card.

His wife—a timid, pretty little thing who needed but a year or so and a bit of experience in order to know how to handle him, watched it with her usual sigh of resignation. For Ernest, young and exceedingly handsome and man-

aging a branch office of his father's powerful corporation, had been a prize catch—more than that, she was more girlishly and wildly in love with him than ever. The women—who'd never happened to think of it before, for some reason—murmured audibly that he was treating her vilely. This idea, no doubt, was largely due to the fact that Judith Heverill, whenever she took the field, made a runaway farce of what had formerly been a neck-and-neck affair.

In this case it was the same. After dancing with her most of the evening—or else sitting out—he decided the next morning that his office didn't need him and that his health *did* need a run to a far-off roadhouse—with Mrs. Heverill. That was the beginning. He saw her four days and one evening the first week; five days and two evenings the second week; and seven days and four evenings the third week. His wife stayed away from things most of the time, cried a bit, and didn't even speak when she did go out; women spoke of nothing else and a few of them even slighted Judith; several men sneered—but they were those whose advances Mrs. Heverill had never accepted. As for herself, she simply smiled in her slow, enigmatical way!

It was now the first afternoon of the fourth week, and Ernest had dropped in for a tête-à-tête tea.

He had sat there, for the most part, absolutely silent, devouring her hungrily with his eyes—true, it's a hackneyed phrase, but an apt and acceptable one. Occasionally he hotly murmured some utterly senseless and exaggerated compliment.

"Silly boy," rippled Judith, "*do* give

me another of your darling cigarettes!"

He obeyed with such alacrity that the business was clumsy.

She took the cigarette, leaned forward to light it from the match he was holding with trembling fingers—and then took it from her lips with a little laugh:

"You light it for me. You do it so beautifully!"

He flushed with pleasure—for it is one of the few infallible tricks to please a male, be he young or old, wise or not so, provided the woman be even passably good-looking and a half-way decent master of intonation.

Ernest, before lighting it, kissed the tip that had been between her lips and lingered over it. He was only twenty-three and had made love mostly to the flapper variety.

Another ripple; another "silly boy!" However, it's surprising how those two words cause the young heart to pump when uttered by an older woman.

Ernest, for a time, raved along with compliments, Judith simply putting in a word or a smile or a gesture here and there—but they all counted. She was letting him have all the line he wanted, giving him heart and hope, as the experienced angler plays with his prize before putting on the pressure at the exact moment and landing him at will.

Precisely after he had kissed the tip of her third cigarette and gulped his second cocktail, Ernest flung himself on his knees, his eyes sparkling, his breath coming fast.

"Judith—Judith! How I love the word—how I love to call it—how I'd love to say it always and always! . . . Judith—Judith, Judith, Judith. . . . I love you, dearest—love you, love you, love you! . . . Dear God, *how* I love you!"

He paused a moment and fervently brushed his hand across his forehead so that his hair was sadly mussed—for he had suddenly remembered that this had been extremely effective with girls. Half-rising from one knee, he put out his arms—but Judith tenderly gave him

her hand and he stayed where he was.

"Judith—Judith, I worship you! Can't you love me—can't you, can't you? . . . Can't you love me and cut out everything—this horrible life, living here alone—and come off with me to another country? Aren't you lonesome, dearest—a widow for four years? . . . Think, Judith—just think! You and I—just you and I—all alone by ourselves in some gorgeous, sun-kissed land! . . . Italy—yes, Italy! . . . Capri—or Sorrento—or Florence—or— . . . Yes, that's it—Florence! . . . Think! Florence, dear, just you and I together—you and I—always you and I. . . . Think of it, Judith—*think of it!*"

"I—I *am* thinking of it," whispered Judith Heverill.

"JUDITH!" He started to rise; but she held her arm a *bit* more rigidly—just enough so—and he sank back to his knees and furiously kissed her hand. The palm, the back, the fingers.

"God, Judith, how I love you—how I love you! . . . Won't you love me—*can't* you love me! . . . This isn't life—this isn't *living*—it's existing! . . . I'm—I'm not happy, dear—I'm not happy and I never will be until I have you—you, you, all of you for all the time! . . . *You're* not happy—you *can't* be—alone this way! You *shouldn't* be alone—it isn't *right*! . . . Love me—love me, dear, and we'll cut out the whole thing and go off to our paradise!"

He stopped abruptly, and buried his head in her lap, her hand pressed feverishly to his lips.

Judith lightly stroked his hair with her soft, exquisitely tapering fingers. Most women, at this point—or not *quite* as far along—had rebukingly, but not *too* rebukingly, told him of the virtues of his wife. She was so young; she was so charmingly pretty; she was so wildly in love with him; she *did* make him happy—and his answer had always been further violent protestations of infatuation.

Not so Mrs. Heverill.

"Poor Ernest," she trilled softly,

"poor Ernest! . . . You *haven't* been happy, have you, dear? . . ."

"I love you—love you, love you, love you! . . . God—*how I love you!* . . . I love you—love you and want you—want you for mine always and always! I can't *live* without you!" came the smothered, impassioned words.

"Dear boy—dearest boy," continued the low, yet vibrant voice. "You—you *haven't* been happy! . . . Youth *does* make mistakes—horrible mistakes—when it marries too early!" The voice softened, sympathized, and love unleashed ran through it. "I—I've often wondered how you came to—to marry Madge!"

Ernest started and frowned, almost angrily—much in the same manner he would have had someone made a disparaging remark about his car—and a practically new car that had been slighted for the first time. The offense is always greater, then. However, he kissed her hand and murmured something about "heaven in Florence!"

"Yes—yes, poor boy, it *would* be so," the vibrant voice went on. "You haven't been happy, lately. She's not *quite* your kind, is she? She's so young, and inexperienced, and—and not having that type of beauty that men of your kind must have to love!"

Ernest just mumbled—not murmured—and kissed her hand. He kissed it twice—no more—and the kisses weren't so searing.

"But you *do* love me, don't you?" whispered Judith, stroking his hair, "especially after having been disappointed the first time—it always makes the true and real love stronger! . . . But how could you have, dear? She's not your type. She so young and foolish and— . . . Oh, she even wears her clothes dowdily and doesn't even know quite what to do or say at the proper time—we've all noticed it. We've all noticed it; and spoken of it; and pitied you for it!"

This time Ernest didn't even mumble. Withal, he again kissed her hand—once!

"Dear boy. You *were* so young, though—barely out of college, weren't you?"

Now he didn't even mumble; he didn't even kiss her hand. He rose, his face flamingly red, his jaws closed so tightly that the skin showed white, his eyes religiously studying the pattern of the rug:

"Cigarette," he breathed, his words husky. "Get—get awf'ly nervous without 'em for any length of time. Bad habit—bad—get *awf'ly* nervous. I— . . . But—but, say, Judith, I don't know, you know! . . . I—Madge—Madge was certainly some run after by all the chaps in college and," he puffed complacently and quite unconsciously threw out his chest and raised his head and sought a mirror, "*and she took me!*"

Mrs. Haverill spoke a single word: "Really?"

Ernest was crude—horribly crude—but it must be remembered that he was only twenty-three. Abruptly he changed the subject. In the short space of five minutes—no more—he gave his exhaustive opinion on the war in Europe, golf, automobiles, literature, dancing, *and* the weather.

Judith Haverill had calmly listened, apparently vitally interested. The strain was too great; he could bear it no longer. Suddenly he yanked out his watch, tried mightily to grow pale as he stepped back with a gasp, and remembered a business engagement that meant thousands for which he was already half-an-hour late. Not—not that *he* cared—Lord, no—but dad—dad, you know—dad! . . .

It wasn't more than twenty minutes later that Judith Haverill saw him speeding by on his "business engagement." His wife was beside him in the big racer—for the first time in a month—and one arm was thrown protectingly and bravely about her, as if he wanted the whole world to know that she was his—*his!* He was talking a perfect streak—and Judith would have wagered that he was telling her about

"those damned women that he'd just heard had been knocking her!"

She lit a cigarette and looked at herself quizzically in the glass:

"Judith—and you're still just fool woman enough to mind those cats saying that you were too old to hold him!
 . . . Oh, well, you took him from

them—and someone *had* to have the nasty job before he drove that poor youngster of a wife insane—and I'm pretty certain that the thing took! The disagreeable thing is, though, that they'll *both* curse you to the end of their days for making him appreciate her!"



FIRST LOVE

By Eugene Dolson

I HAD almost forgotten her,
 But the face of my first love
 Comes back to me tonight
 On the wings of memory.
 Her figure was perfect,
 Her ankles shapely,
 And she had nice hair.

It was summertime,
 And we were often together
 In the moonlight.
 Most of all, I remember the time
 We strolled, side by side,
 Through the arcade,
 When she promised to be mine.

* * * * *

And the bachelor paused in meditation,
 Vainly trying to recall her name.



TO forget the name of last week's sweetheart means that you are busy, but to forget the name of your first sweetheart means that you are growing old.



THERE are several ways of being dull, the first of which is being clever.



THE MEMORY OF EDNA

By Owen Hatteras

COLEMAN met Edna Ranleigh in college and fell in love with her. But college atmosphere lacks reality. They were both afraid of permanent ties. Besides, Coleman was a poor boy, working his way through school and dared not plan too definitely for the future.

Coleman loved Edna all through college. He thought her the daintiest, sweetest, cleverest little thing that he had ever seen. He liked the way she giggled, little giggles with trills at the end. She was a slender little thing, with big eyes and with soft little curls around her face. She had a way of getting quite close and looking up at him out of the corner of her eyes, her chin tilted. He liked that.

Edna read books that she considered deep and she and Coleman spent long evenings talking over their future, and talking about books and people and life. Edna said that Coleman had a future, a Big, Big Future. They used to discuss it. She listened while he read his first stories to her and when a magazine actually took one, they had a little dinner to celebrate and drank to the Big Future, and Edna told him all about her big hopes for him, her ideals.

Of course, Edna didn't devote all of her time at college to Coleman. He wasn't even a fraternity man and a girl couldn't stay home always, so she went to dances with other men and to entertainments and games, but she saved a lot of time for Coleman and he worked pretty hard for the money to take her places and for candy. She told Coleman the evenings with him were her Happy Evenings.

After college, they separated. Cole-

man went to the city. Edna went back to her home in Wichita, Kansas, to teach school. They wrote to each other rather frequently at first, though the letters grew fewer after a while.

Coleman had a rather difficult time of it, seeking his fortune. But when things went wrong he thought of Edna and read her letters for consolation. If there were page after page in a scrawly hand about where she had been and what she had been doing, there were added sentences, saying, "I am always thinking of you and wishing for your future", or "You will succeed, of course, for you are such a real, wonderful sort of a person, to whom success must come."

Coleman, alone in the city, believed in Edna's letters. Other things went wrong, he had to take a position as a clerk, even, for a while, but Edna's letters helped him. He felt that her ideals must be realized. He worked hard because of the memory of her.

Two years passed and Coleman began to get along better. He even began to wonder if he dared to ask Edna to marry him. He compared her to every woman he met. Always, her slender, graceful little form made the other women seem heavy and awkward, always her soft little face made the other women seem rouged and made-up and coarse; always her smile of sympathy made the other women seem hard, crude.

Then, just when he felt able to marry, to give Edna the things that she must have, she sent him a letter, saying she was about to be married. It was her people, of course. It always is. An old family friend, with money, and her

parents urged her and she didn't know what to do. Coleman wrote a long letter, asking her to marry him at once. The answer was a marriage announcement and a tearful little note. She hadn't dared. Her people had sacrificed so much for her, sending her away to college, and she had taught for two years and now they—wanted this.

For months Coleman thought that he was broken-hearted, though he finally got back to work again. In his heart remained the image of Edna, soft, alluring, smiling up into his face with her wistful, big eyes.

"She couldn't help it," he told himself, "I'll try to succeed. She says she still believes in me. I'll try to be true to her memory."

And he was. Always, before he attempted a new piece of work, he asked himself if it were what Edna would have approved of. He liked to imagine talking things over with her.

He did not marry. Other women did not interest him enough for that. In spite of Edna's marriage, he felt that some day, sometime, she would come back to him. He pictured their meetings, a dozen meetings, a hundred. Sometimes Edna was saddened by the experiences of the past but made more beautiful by her sadness. Sometimes she was rich, divorced, gay, dissatisfied. Sometimes her husband had died and she was all alone, penniless, waiting for him, wanting him. But always she came back to him. And always, in all of the dreams, she was the same, her face was older, a few lines in it but her eyes were smiling, tender, the hair, even when dreams added grey, was soft and curling around her face.

Coleman never got to Wichita but often he met people from there and, when he could, he asked about Edna. The news was usually the same—yes, she was still married—and apparently quite happy—he had to ask in an impersonal, I-used-to-go-to-school-with-a-girl sort of way. Yes, her husband was a fine fellow, they were building a big house—nice people.

These reports meant nothing because

some day he would see Edna again and the years of separation would be only a memory. The real memory of Edna which he carried made him do better things. He succeeded, not as well as in the earlier dreams, perhaps, but in an unsensational, quiet way. Other women suffered in comparison, always, loud, noisy, tasteless, things, ugly, too, no restraint, no ideals. Edna, now—

One day Coleman went to an automobile race. He didn't care much about it, but someone had given him a grandstand ticket and he had never seen a real automobile race and he happened to have nothing else to do that afternoon.

At the speedway he found his seat and watched the things around him, the annoying sellers of sandwiches and drinks, the announcers, the very young girls. Back of him were a party of tourists. They wore cheap automobile toggery and talked in loud voices. They pointed and laughed and bought everything that was offered for sale, joking with the sales boys, ate peanuts and let the shells fall onto Coleman's shoulders. Finally, they started asking him questions. He did not care to talk to strangers—they usually bored him—but he had to answer civilly. The questions were the usual stupid, thoughtless kind. A fat woman, in a hideous red cap, which fit too closely around her too-red face, took special delight in asking questions of him. He glanced around at her, but after the first look, and the first question, he decided he could answer just as well without turning in his seat.

"What," she asked, "is the name of the driver in the blue car?" She prodded him with a sharp finger.

"Resta," answered Coleman. "I think it's down on the program, isn't it?" He knew that she held one in her hand.

"Oh, yes, I see now, thank you, and isn't he a foreigner, an Italian, or something like that?"

"I believe he is," Coleman murmured, politely.

The man on the other side of the woman with the red bonnet laughed, a loud, good-natured laugh. "Ain't she

great," he said, "She's always got to find someone to answer questions for her."

He pulled her cap good-naturedly, and the rest of the party laughed. The man offered Coleman a cigar. Coleman refused with a sigh.

"Just came from Wichita," said the man. "Made the trip in our car—a beauty, I tell you. Not a single blow-out all the way."

"But George, you can't drive like these fellows," said the woman in the red cap, "I'd like to see you trying to race that—that Rest-aurant." The party all laughed.

Wichita! Maybe they knew—only, of course, it wasn't possible, Edna, so fine, so dainty, a thoroughbred, couldn't know a woman like this, stupid, vapid.

Coleman turned around for a better look at her. She was ugly. How could women let themselves grow so charac-

terless? Still, she might know something about Edna. Wichita wasn't so large, and it had been a couple of years, anyhow, since he had heard about her, and—why—fifteen years since college days.

"Wichita," he said, "why, I used to know a girl in Wichita years ago. Wonder if you know her? Her name used to be Edna Ranleigh, its Mrs. Framers, now."

The woman with the red cap threw back her head and laughed. She laughed with her mouth open, a way that was always particularly annoying to Coleman. Then she slapped her husband, quite hard, on the shoulder.

"Well, well, well," she said, and put out her hand, "I know you now, even with your mustache disguise, 'old Jack Dalton', why you're Billie Coleman. Don't you remember me? I'm Edna. Meet my husband."



AT TWILIGHT

By Bliss Carman

NOW the fire is lighted
On the chimney stone,
Day goes down the valley,
I am left alone.

Now the misty purple
Floods the darkened vale,
And the stars come out
On the twilight trail.

The mountain river murmurs
In its rocky bed,
And the stealthy shadows
Fill the house with dread.

Then I hear your voice
At the open door,—
Brightly burns the fire,
I need fear no more.

FATA MORGANA

By Frank Pease

IT was a strange, strange land I had visited, strangest perhaps of all the world, a place filled with a semblance far and vague as of dreams, wherein values, transmuted by the weird alchemy of unreality, reversed themselves, and through some enchanted process that which was dull and drab and common became pictorial, ideal, ecstatic with the vivid dignity of the beautiful. Humanity which had seemed a tawdry and loathsome matter to me, a thing burthened with insufferable malignancy, encrusted with such profound and aged evil that in the silence of my heart, like a curse, I pronounced it The Horror, became, such was the charm of this strange land, a thing of beauty, and men and children, even women, appeared in the clothing of an ineffable grace, moving in that divine communion foretold of prophets—brothers and sisters one together.

It was not difficult to find, this land of dreams; indeed, so simple was the journey I wondered I had not taken it before. My gratitude, usually a sluggish thing, bids me point the way for all men. But first let me describe this land of enchantment.

The air was lang'rous with poppy and mandragora whose exotic scents brushed the tips of their wings beneath my nostrils. Everywhere were flowers, not the bold and gaudy livery of common days, but blossoms cultured to strange and splendrous geometries. Wheels, squares, ovals, triangles, cres-

cents, and curious polygonal figures no man could read took mottled arborescent shapes against the spread of emerald lawns. Adown vistas of subtle length unfearing birds tossed carols of delight. The place was filled with their winged notes. Wavering fountains cast showers of silvery sound against the low boughs of giant trees through which the sun traced magic patterns.

Depths of unknown feeling took hold upon my heart, and time was lost, eternity seemed a happy thing were I to stay myself amidst such gardens. I wandered through smooth unnumbered streets where calm and ancient temples crowned the hills and slim Ionic shafts clove the dark of trees sighing for the stars. Groups of folk moved about charged with the sweet strange boon of common ends. Processions came and passed led by robed priests. Chanting acolytes bore the *feu sacré* to distant leafy altars. Incense hung soft banners in the fainter breeze, and music caught on seraph strings, soothed my soul to quietude.

O! happy, happy land, enchanted land, I thought. Land where wealth, beauty, peace, all things, speak the dignity of man. Here one can live. And as I passed the massive gates of bronze on my return to the world of life I felt the Brotherhood of Man had come when I read these words, graved deep on the bronze, graved deeper on my heart:

GREENLAWN CEMETERY.



TIPICALLY SPEAKING

NO TIP, TO THE WISE, IS SUFFICIENT

By Randolph Bartlett

CONSIDER the tip, and how it is necessary to conclude a separate peace with each of half a dozen servitors in order to escape, living and intact, from a restaurant.

It was not ever thus. In days of old, when the traveler stopped at an inn, he bullied everyone from the stable-boy to the landlord. If he did not like the wine, he flung the bottle at the waiter's head. If the roast was under- or over-done, he called for the landlord and smote him with the flat of his sword, or prodded him in the fleshy parts of his anatomy with its point. If service was slow he roared around the tavern like a wounded sea-lion. If the wife or daughter of the proprietor was pretty, he kissed her. And in the end if he decided to pay for his entertainment he did so, if not, he did not. This is the life.

Yet things are seldom so bad that they may not be a great deal worse. Even if you have submitted to the rapacity of the kaiser of the coat-room, the magnificent head-waiter, the supercilious ordinary waiter, the lordly wine steward, and the vendor of cigars, the possibilities have not been exhausted. For example—have you not encountered the latest addition to the cohorts of mendicants in cafés, the custodian of the washroom? He makes the matter of removing the dust of the street from your hands, a delightful ceremony. He relieves you of the arduous task of turning on the water and putting the plug in the bowl. He will not even permit you to exert yourself to the extent of reaching up to the rack for a towel, and

proceeds vigorously to brush your clothes, which already, in the course of the day, have been similarly treated by the Pullman porter, the barber's boy, and the bootblack. His tender solicitude is touching; at least that is its motive. If the touch does not succeed you hear something with a *Gott strafe* in it as you depart. He is the latest invention of the café proprietor, whose theory seems to be that his patrons are pleased in direct ratio to the various means afforded of giving away money.

But no careful observer can believe that the limit of ingenuity in this respect has been reached. The principle of the tip is that you pay for extra attention and service. Carrying the idea to its logical conclusion, therefore, many additions to the regiment of beggars are to be expected from time to time, as follows:

Door-openers, for whose benefit the entrances to cafés will be equipped with devices preventing you from getting in without their aid.

Chair-placers, without bribing whom you will be required to eat your meal standing.

Serviette-stewards, who, unless suitably rewarded, will not provide the wherewith to prevent the escaping drops of soup from trickling down your bosom.

Music custodians, who, without suitable remuneration, will plug your ears with cotton.

Providers of menu cards, who must receive backsheesh or else will leave you to guess what there is to eat.

The list may be extended indefinitely.

You must have water, cutlery, dishes, butter, bread, salt, pepper and various other accessories to successful dining, and it is unreasonable to expect the regular waiter to attend to such matters. That he does so, at present, without requiring special remuneration, simply goes to prove his tolerance and patience. Eventually all these things will be added to the bill, but, instead of doing away with the necessity for tipping the attendants who bring them, this will establish them on such a basis as will make the tipping logical. For we do not give tips so much for the extras as for the necessities. This is clear from the fundamental principle of tipping the waiter himself; since we could hardly get the food without a waiter, and yet we pay him for bringing it.

Yet why stop with the dining-room itself, and its approaches? Is the cook entitled to no consideration? Consider what he can do to your food if he takes a dislike to you. His good will in not mixing a spoonful of prussic acid in the gravy, or sprinkling a few grains of bichloride of mercury over the salad, should be recognized. Likewise the noble soul who washes the dishes—is he to be ignored? So far as his service goes, is it not deserving of appreciation? Is it not as important that the plates and cups should be cleansed faithfully and well as that the waiter should be prompt in bringing the food from the kitchen? More so, unquestionably. Then, by all means, let us tip the dishwasher.

Another question naturally arises—or rather a group of questions, of which one is a sample—shall we tip the man, woman, child or Chinaman who peels the potatoes? Assuredly the potatoes must be peeled, and the diner must enjoy the good will of the official who is assigned to this duty. Should we incur his ill will, it is quite within his province to leave large patches of epidermis upon the *pommes de terre*, not to mention adhesive bits of soil, to be chopped up and hashed brown, French fried, or mashed with the remainder of the tuber. What is it to him? He is

guarding our interests, and if we are so unappreciative of the fact as not to reward his vigilance, let us take the consequences. Likewise with him who removes the worms from the apples and the bugs from the vegetables. If we want our orders to combine meat and vegetables, so be it; tip not this artist, and he will understand, and leave them undisturbed, but if he is to carry out his function he must be recognized in a substantial way.

Nor is it reasonable that our gratuities should cease with the dining room, kitchen and scullery. In this, as in all other philosophy of life, we should go back to first causes. The restaurant gets its supply of meat, probably, direct from the packing company, and so before dining we should visit that institution, and make a personal call upon the shipping clerk, the man who cut up the carcass, and him who originally deprived the animal of the breath of life. Certainly if the latter did not see fit to slay the cow, steer, lamb, goat, pig, or whatever other source of carnivorous food we prefer, we could not eat it, and, while not versed in the gentle art of the abattoir, I imagine there must be subtle means by which, if the butcher has not the interests of the ultimate consumer at heart, he can end his victim's life in such manner that the flesh will disagree with him who eats it. The next man down the line, who dismembers the creature, can inject oil of aloes or other nauseating fluids into the tissues, and the delivery department can select portions of tough and ancient quadrupeds for the restaurant where we are permitted to dine. In like manner the poultry raiser, the truck gardener, the cereal manufacturer, and all other persons engaged in the producing of food material, are perpetually either serving us carefully and well, or venting their dislike upon us, and so it is only right that all these kind thoughts should be rewarded, or unkind ones forestalled.

Parsimonious persons will object that all these individuals are already paid for their services. That is beside the question. The waiter is paid, theoret-

ically at least, by the restaurateur, to carry our food to us from the kitchen, but no proprietor of a dining salon would require a waiter to serve any person who was known as a non-tipper. We do not tip in payment for service, but for extra service and attention. The niggard will say that he does not desire attention, that all he asks of a waiter is that he bring the food, place it on the table, and go away. He may declare that he gets no pleasure in seeing a man in evening clothes tote in a big platter, with a very small, dome-shaped cover nestling in its center, lift this shield and expose a diminutive bit of steak, looking the while into his patron's eyes with the expression of a man who knows that nothing the earth can produce is good enough for the customer of the moment, but still hopes that the poor efforts of the hostelry will not be despised, the while he is thinking, "The poor boob! He wouldn't know a filet mignon from a plate of hash." The niggard, I say, may insist that he receives no special thrill from this proceeding. If so, he is not of the elect. He does not belong. Back to Childs' with him! Dining is an art, and no person but artists should be permitted to engage in it. Remove the delicate grace of the waiter's finesse, and dining becomes mere eating—*gegessen*. It is then a disgusting process, and should be confined to the vulgar feed troughs where waiters shout, the length of the room, "Adam and Eve on a raft and a tub of mud."

Never is the art of the waiter so supreme, however, as when he is dividing an order between two persons. "Shall I serve it, sir?" he asks, as, with a Chesterfieldian bow and flourish, he unmasks the creation, politely ignoring the fact that ordinary man has now reached the point in his evolution when it is no longer within his ability to carve fowl or roast, or bisect a fish. Does the waiter vaunt his superior talents? No. He gently asks permission to perform this difficult feat, as if he were seeking a privilege, and not offering to extricate you from an embarrassing predicament.

Picture your quandary if he simply placed the dish on the table, and retired. Think of your agonies as, with all eyes in the dining room focused upon you, you wrestle with the tremendous problem of cutting the thing in two. I have had nightmares about this. I have dreamed that the waiter basely deserted me and left me helpless with a tenderloin steak for two. Let the horrid details pass, except that, when I reached the point where I had climbed on my chair, and with one foot on the steak, was hewing to the line, with gravy splashing in every direction, I always awoke in a clammy sweat. If you think that the bisecting of a piece of tender meat is a simple matter, you display your ignorance. See how the waiter does it, and then abandon all hope of ever becoming worthy of being the high priest of such a ceremonial. Note the wrinkle on his brow as he examines the knife, and the sharp staccato of his voice as he orders his second assistant to hasten to the kitchen and get a better one. Mark his indignation as he shows the knife to another waiter. You wonder what is wrong with the blade, but do not brood over it, for you never will know. It is something terrible, but the waiter will protect the honor of the restaurant and keep the secret buried within his noble heart. Comes the new knife at last. It is inspected keenly, and the waiter breathes a sigh of relief. It is found worthy. Then the master of ceremonies bends, with grace and yet with dignity, over the unsuspecting fragment of steak. He turns it around, prodding it gently with the fork, apparently searching for a vital, vulnerable spot. His face lights up. He has solved the knotty problem. He caresses the steak with the knife, as if he were etching his intentions upon it. The little finger of his knife hand is curved backward, showing how lightly and delicately the operation is being performed, as he moves the knife with about the same motion as the second violinist when Eliza crosses the ice. So perfect is the workmanship that the slices hardly fall from their position

when severed. Carefully abstracting the inside pieces, he places portions of mathematically exact equality on each of two plates, and you wonder if you will be able to summon the courage to tell him that you really like the well-done, outside parts best. Meanwhile he has begun his pursuit of the sauce, which he inveigles into a corner of the platter, and then relentlessly scoops up, and jiggles off the spoon, first upon this portion, then upon that, with all the dainty fastidiousness of a man sprinkling nitroglycerine upon a red-hot stove. Now, his bosom swelling with consciousness of a task well performed, he brings to you the fruits of his consummate art. Yet there are heathen who say waiters do not earn their tips, and who would slash the steak in two with a single stroke. Such as they have no appreciation of the amenities of existence, and, probably, regard Beethoven as greater than Chaminade, Balzac than Chambers, and Rubens than Matisse.

So let not the tip be discouraged, but

rather developed, for it stimulates the art of living. Let us not restrict it to restaurant, tonsorial parlor, Pullman car and hotel. Let us tip more frequently and generously. Let us include the clerk in the store, who condescends to sell us something; the street car conductor who permits us to pay our fare and the motorman who consents to stop the car when we desire to alight; the teller who allows us to deposit money in the bank; the postman who disregards his own convenience and brings us our mail; the bartender; the theater box-office emperor; the laundry man; the railway ticket agent; the policeman on the beat; the theater usher; the church usher; the minister; the landlord; the garbage man; the elevator operator; the elevator starter; the telephone girl; the newsboy; the pawnbroker; the doctor; the dentist; our parents; and when we feel, at last, that we are soon to leave this vale of tears and tips, let us not forget to leave a suitable honorarium for the undertaker.



FROM A BOOK OF DREAMS

By John Hanlon

I

WHEN she heard his footsteps, her heart beat so violently that the rose upon her breast shed its petals: but when he drew near and called her name across the garden wall, she forced herself to turn idly aside and pretended not to hear him.

II

"The past is dead," she said, when they met after the kiss of time had healed her wounds; but, when their hands touched over the table, hers trembled and the tea slopped into the saucer.

III

"Love lives forever," whispered the man to the maid, as they stole away through the twilight; but the ghost of long dead years peered out of the older woman's eyes and laughed bitterly.

IN THE SHADE OF A FAMILY TREE

By Perry Epstein

FROM the very top of the upper upper class Mrs. Payton looked with languid tolerance upon the lower upper class, and even accepted, with a bored shrug of her perfectly molded shoulders, some members of the lower upper class into her own circle. That may sound like a gross exaggeration, but it is not. Such things, you know, are sometimes done.

Not that Mrs. Payton ever acknowledged the equality of those unfortunates who were born into the lower upper strata. Indeed, no. They were always made aware that they were merely permitted to bask in the effulgence of the upper upper class. That was all.

In the decadent state of our republican society it was a necessary evil to thus mix the classes. It was sometimes even necessary for an upper upper classer to marry one of the lower upper classers. In fact, it had been necessary, such is the deplorable state of affairs in America, where the check book is almost as important as the Blue Book, for Mrs. Payton to ally her aristocratic family with a lower upper classer. You must not think that the process of matrimony had automatically transformed Payton from a lower upper classer into an upper upper classer. Once a lower upper classer always a lower upper classer. But even so, Payton did not mind—not much. He would have liked to be her husband, even if he could not attain the pinnacle of social equality. In fact, if we may put it in the language of a class the existence of which Mrs. Payton was entirely ignorant, he was stuck on her.

Payton did not marry her, as some said, because she was a Van Gram-

marcy, but just because a big human love surged in his big human heart. If she had been just a mere nobody in, say, the upper middle, or even the middle or the lower middle class, he would have loved her just as much and would have married her just as readily. For such is the crudity of the male of the species, when they love they do not stay the ardor of their passion until they have consulted a social register, but rush pellmell into all sorts of mésalliances with tradespeople and others equally common. In fact, Payton himself was in trade—on a large scale. Railroads, I believe. Or national banks.

He was going to his railroad, or his national bank, on this occasion I am going to tell you about. It was on a certain morning of a certain week in the spring of 1915, when the birds were singing in treetops that were just bursting into green. Nature, being feminine, was turning all her thoughts to a new spring suit; and the male animals, from the little bird singing on the window ledge, to Payton, humming a sentimental ballad in his room, were turning their thoughts, as is their perennial habit, to love.

On his way out a soft, soft look came into Payton's eyes, and at his wife's door he hesitated just the fraction of a second. Then he went boldly in, despite all his training to the contrary, and kissed her as she lay asleep.

"Don't be vulgar," she said, without opening her eyes.

And she did not open her eyes for several hours after that, even though the birds sang of love at her windows and the soft sunlight melted hearts so

they would be able to read the messages the fairies were wirelessly from sylvan glades beside gurgling brooks. You and I know what these messages are that fill the spring air, even though we have never been outside the city and the only glades we know about are in the public parks where the lower classes display their affections openly and unashamed. But Mrs. Payton knew nothing about such things. In fact, they were not even mentioned in the Blue Book. And she did not know that this spring morning had momentarily reawakened her husband's love that had been buried in the shade of a family tree.

When she finally awoke, Mrs. Payton almost committed the indiscretion of yawning, but she checked that evidence of commonness, and rang for her maid.

"Hester," she asked, with just the proper hauteur in her tone, "what day is this?"

"Tues—" began the maid, but Mrs. Payton checked her with one cold glance.

"I beg pardon," Hester corrected herself. "This is the day of the Plimpton ball."

When Mrs. Payton finally fared forth it was afternoon. She went with much the same air that royalty would show itself to the commoners. She was a treat to all beholders, and she knew it. She was arrayed, as befitted an upper upper classer, in the very last word of fashion. From her dainty bronze slipper to her chic little hat, she was perfect. She was so well pleased with her costume that, in the shopping district, she determined to walk, her car trailing along near the curb ready to pick her up again when she should give the word. She felt just a little thrill of pride at the attention she attracted. Just a little, for, of course, it would never do for her to notice her surroundings. She felt so well satisfied with herself that she determined to go to her husband's railroad, or his bank, and delight him by going to dinner with him, and afterward they would dress

and go to the Plimpton ball together. She felt just a little tinge of regret over the occurrence of the morning. Not because she had reprimanded him, but because his behavior had made it necessary for her to do so, and she would show him that he had been forgiven by this mark of special favor.

If you are a New York millionaire, you know the little restaurant in the basement, just around the corner, for most of the millionaires eat their lunch there. But if you are not a New York millionaire, I will have to tell you about it. You get the best steak in New York there (35 cents, with brown gravy), and as you pass out you pay your check at the little cubbyhole at the end of the cigar stand and receive a smile from a pair of merry blue eyes in return. That's Pearl. Some day she will be rich, for a millionaire will not only give her a tip on stocks, as is frequently done, but will loan her a little money to follow up the tip. Then she will take her father out of the ditch where he spends his days planting sewer pipe and other modern conveniences, and make a man out of him, the same as she is making a woman out of herself. For Pearl is a social climber. She has dragged herself from the lower lower class up through the upper lower class, and into the lower middle class, from where she is struggling toward the middle middle, yea, and even the upper middle class.

Pearl understood the message of spring. She was listening to it when Gertie, who has the first six tables on the right, accosted her.

"Gee, kid," said Gertie, "yuh look like a reg'ler fashun plate to-day. Whatcha gonna do, get married?"

"Naw," replied Pearl, flashing her ready smile even on Gertie, where it was utterly wasted. "I gotta date, though. I'm goin' to the country this afternoon."

And so it happened that Pearl, hurrying north, came upon Mrs. Payton making her leisurely way south to her husband's railroad, or his bank, or whatever it is.

Pearl, too, had on a new gown. It was none of those cheap installment house things like her friends wore. She had made it herself, and she knew it was the very latest style, for she had stood long hours in front of big restaurants and theaters to gather her ideas, until finally she had seen just the thing. She did not know it, but it was Mrs. Payton's gown she had copied, and now, just at the psychological moment, Pearl looked at Mrs. Payton in the original, and Mrs. Payton glanced casually at Pearl in the cheap, homemade imitation. It could hardly be called an imitation. There could only be one such gown, the same as there could only be one Sistine Madonna, or only one Mona Lisa. But Pearl had striven in her feeble way for what the creator of Mrs. Payton's gown had achieved.

"How ridiculous," thought Mrs. Payton, with an amused smile.

Pearl looked the other over with the eye of a connoisseur. Then she looked

at her own reflection in the plate-glass windows she passed. And she smiled with satisfaction at the botch she knew was made in the latest fashion.

At the next corner Pearl stopped. It was the trysting-place. The birds chattered in the gutter and the mellow sun caressed her and imparted a foretaste of the satin-soft air of the country.

She smiled happily as a man came out of a nearby doorway.

"Gee," he said, "you look great in that dress."

And he took her by the homemade sleeve and hurried her to a trolley car. "I just had a narrow escape," he continued. "My wife just passed. I just got into that doorway in time."

And they both laughed.

"Paytie," she said, "you shouldn't squeeze my hand here where people can see you."

And they laughed again. It was spring, you know.



CHICKEN SALAD

By Frederick Robinson, Jr.

AUTUMN night by the sea. Pale moon sailing in and out through the clouds, now illuminating the rugged surf-bathed shore,—now casting all into deep obscurity. He and She, hand in hand, gazing over the water.

He—"Helen, do you still love me?"

She—"Yes, Harold."

He—"And there is not the slightest doubt lurking in your heart?"

She (*softly*)—"No."

He—"Dearest, what tells you that you love me?"

She (*more softly*)—"I can tell."

He—"But how?"

She—"Oh."

He (*passionately*)—"But, darling, tell me how."

She—"I can tell by——"

He (*urgently*)—"Yes."

She—"by the way my heart begins to——"

He—"Yes, love."

She—"to throb and my nerves to tingle when——"

He—"Yes, yes, go on."

She—"—when you blow your cigarette smoke in my face."

THE BIGAMIST

By Donna Shinn

HE had been arrested. At the trial the four wives sat in the courtroom ready to defend him if necessary.

Wife number one had beautiful auburn hair, but was otherwise unattractive; wife number two had glorious eyes the color of Italian skies; wife number three had perfect teeth, and wife number four was extremely ugly. They looked at the Bigamist adoringly. They thought they loved him.

He began, "I have loved only one woman in the whole of my lifetime."

The four wives glanced at each other triumphantly!

"She was beautiful physically as well as mentally. Her hair was marvelous, her eyes heavenly and her teeth perfect."

The four wives looked down self-consciously.

"I loved her as I love myself. *I worshiped her.* When she died—"

The four wives stood up suddenly and then sat down again.

"When she died I was almost insane

with grief. I roamed the streets seeking anyone who might resemble her. It was then I met my second wife. Her hair was almost the exact shade of my adored departed angel's."

Wife number two arose, sniffed scornfully and went out.

"After a few months I began to long for the blue eyes of my cherished one. I wandered everywhere, glancing into the faces of women. It was then I met my third wife."

Wife number three arose, threw the Bigamist a dark look, and went out.

"Later I could think only of the white even teeth of her whom I had idolized. It was then I met my fourth wife."

Wife number four arose, snapped her perfect teeth at him and went out.

"They were all a disappointment. For after all, none of them possessed the most beautiful thing of all—a lovely soul! I traversed the city seeking for such a soul. It was then I met my fifth wife. With all of her ugliness she might—"

Wife number five arose *and went out.*



IF all the women in the world had broken hearts the men would still be drinking cocktails and eating hearty dinners.



THE vices of the world all go back to Adam. It is only in the virtues that fashions change.

THE PHANTOM BABY

By Louis Wilkinson

"I CALL it an invasion of one's personality!"

Mark Holland was a big slow-moving, easy-going man, rarely stirred to strong, or even definite expression, but he was stirred now. He was angry and indignant. His sister tried to smooth him down.

"I don't see that it need matter much," she said. "We needn't return their calls."

"I know, I know." He moved over to the fireplace and stumbled on the hearthrug. "Of course, we can do that. But that kind of situation is, don't you see, so very agitating. All their backs will be up. There'll be some possibility of just the kind of awkwardness I most dislike every time we go out. And you know the kind of way they will talk. I shall have the consciousness of their talking in just that sort of way . . . and *that* is an invasion. Good Lord, why can't we be left alone? The continental plan, for newcomers to be the ones to call, that is the rational way, the humane way. I will not be tormented by these people." He spoke quite fiercely.

"Why not forget them?" Lucy Holland's tone was tactful and conciliatory. "We hardly know any of them by sight."

"No—no—it won't work. I can't do that kind of thing. I am constitutionally incapable. I should be worried to death. I can't live among people whom I have rebuffed—people who think I have been deliberately rude to them. You don't understand, Lucy. If they choose to dislike me for my looks, or for anything they'd heard about me, if they were rude to me, I shouldn't care

at all. I should rather enjoy that. What I can't stand is being regarded as the aggressor. I can't stand hurting their feelings and being hated for it. If only I was the sort of person they would cut, instead of being the sort of person who wants to cut them! If only I were Captain Aldington, dismissed the service for being drunk at a brother officer's funeral."

Lucy laughed. "Naval and literary society are so different," she remarked. "If any of your friends were to die, you could get drunk at their funerals as much as you liked, and nobody would mind. It would pass as a symbolic act. But we ought really to have foreseen this trouble when we first thought of moving to a small seaside place. Of course, people were bound to call."

"They never did in London. At least, only the people we wanted did."

"Yes, but that's the way in London. Here it's quite different. And we were specially let in for it because Dr. Trenton used to be at Hoddesley, so near Uncle Linton's place."

"Well, Linton only happens to be a lord because his father swindled in trade and then bribed the Government with his money."

"He is a lord, though," Lucy stroked her brother's hair. "That's all that matters."

He was silent a moment and then broke hurriedly away from her. "I shall go away," he cried. "Let's both clear out. Let's go and live in Wales or in the west of Ireland—in some remote village. We should never have chosen this place. We'll pack up to-day. Well? What?"

"We ought," replied his sister, "to do

something more interesting—more exciting than that." She paused, then, "Captain Aldington!" she cried, mischievously, and her grey-green eyes danced with laughter.

"What of him?" Mark rejoined morosely. "Lucky dog!"

"Wouldn't it be possible—" Lucy clasped her little hands together and looked like a delicious daring child—"wouldn't it be possible for us to do something really very very disgraceful?"

Mark looked at her, astonished and naïf.

"I can't go and get drunk in public," he said. "My stomach is too weak for that. It would be undignified—an unhappy exhibition—no, no."

"Why be imitative?" The girl surveyed intently the little calendar above the writing-table where she was sitting. She was even prettier than usual with that thoughtful look. "Let's strike out on our own—let me think—"

The man walked impatiently toward the door.

"Let's clear out," he repeated with emphasis. "Much simpler."

He stood irresolutely with his hand on the doorknob. His sister turned in her chair.

"It isn't simple at all," she protested. "Packing up isn't simple. Having furniture put in vans isn't simple. Neither is getting another house. Also it would all be a shocking waste of money. And the air of this place suits you. You're run down and the doctor recommended this place particularly."

"He wouldn't have recommended it," Mark Holland sank helplessly into the nearest chair, "if he'd known that all these people were going to call. They'll kill me in a fortnight—nervous collapse—awful!" He patted his forehead.

Lucy was tapping the blottingpad gently with her pen. "I am going," she said, decisively, "to do something very disgraceful. I'm going to have a baby."

"Good Lord! Impossible!" The litterateur's mild large eyes reflected consternation and amazement. "I can't believe that you—I—" He gasped and

sank nearly to the floor. "But that would take so long," he murmured, feebly. "Very drastic, and not immediately effective."

Lucy laughed as though she were ten years old. "I mean in a few days," she explained, "within a week."

Her brother lifted himself up slowly, pressing both hands against the seat of his chair. He turned round towards her as though he were on a pivot.

"Within a week!" he echoed. "I never could have susp—I mean—well—what!" he fumbled vainly for speech. Lucy relieved him.

"That's the worst of it. No one could have suspected, that's the weak point. But then hardly anyone here has seen me, except casually more or less in the distance, and always in outdoor dress. Don't look so bewildered. I'm not really going to have a baby. It's only pretence—just like when we were children. But we'll make it a good pretence. Everyone here will have to believe it."

Mark rose to his feet, took out his handkerchief, waved it rapidly about in the air with one hand, and lo! there was a knot in it. He untied the knot and went through the performance again. After steadying his nerves in this way for a minute or so, he went over to his sister and patted her head. She had begun to write a letter.

"Very good," he remarked, "I quite understand. Excellent. We shall be—what is the phrase?—'social lepers'—or 'pariahs.' Yes, I think they usually say 'pariahs.' But, how are you going to work it? Doctor, and all that—eh?"

"I'm writing to the doctor," the girl replied.

"What doctor?"

"Cyril, of course."

"Young Levellier?" Her brother grunted, evidently not well pleased. "Paid you great attention at Cambridge, I remember. Don't you think it would be—er—rather embarrassing—to have so young a man?"

Lucy laughed and went on writing. "I'm asking for a young woman as well."

"A young woman?"

"We must have a nurse as well as a doctor."

Mark passed both hands violently through his hair. "It seems," he said; "to be going to be a very complicated affair."

He sat down and rested his head on his hands. "How is Levellier to get the nurse?"

Lucy finished her letter. "By great good luck," she said, as she stuck down the envelope, "Cyril happens to be in a bungalow at Northwold, only twenty miles or so from here. We correspond, you know. . . . The nurse will stay with us, and he will put up at the 'Crown.' That will be more proper and rather more conspicuous. During the day the nurse will call at the 'Crown' with an agitated manner, and ask for Dr. Levellier. They will then go out together and take turns on the Promenade engaged in anxious consultations—tones discreetly pitched—very low. Everything most guarded. The nurse will buy the right sort of things and have the right sort of prescriptions made up at the chemist. Bloice is the chemist to go to, he's the biggest gossip in the town. Altogether there will be plenty of beautifully conspicuous occasions."

"Admirable!" Mark's face had changed while the girl was talking, and by now it was clear altogether. Hope and joy, in fact, irradiated his features. "And afterwards we shall be cut, cut, cut, for ever! Hurrah! Three cheers! *Vive le bébé imaginaire!* But, my dear girl," he looked serious again, "are you really sure you don't mind? I must say even I—of course I'm not exactly conventional—but the idea of a young man being brought into this, and a young woman in collaboration—don't you think that's rather—well, just a little?"

"Not at all," Lucy stamped the letter resolutely. "I'm twentieth century, so is Cyril. We're very much twentieth century. I wish you had attended some of our meetings at the Cambridge Socialist Society. Both Girton girls and undergraduates belong to that, you

know. If you had, this *coup d'état* wouldn't surprise you at all."

"H'm," Mark's lingering prejudices were not quite removed. "I'm not up-to-date. I always suspected myself of being Victorian at heart. I don't know that I ever approved much of that Socialist Society. I'm no vulgar propagandist. I don't like these co-educational schemes, either. And all this rotten modern familiarity between boys and girls."

Lucy got up from her chair. "I'm going to the post," she said.

She was at the door when her brother called her. "Hold hard a moment," he cried. "Is that all? You'll have to arrange for a perambulator, or something, won't you?"

"My dear," she smiled benignly at him. "You think of everything. I'm afraid I can hardly ask Cyril to bring a perambulator along, but I shall certainly order one in the town. It will be a clue that no one can possibly miss." She went out, and Mark was left in a whirl.

II.

PROPRIETIES were carefully considered. The nurse arrived in the morning, the doctor early in the afternoon. Mark, very grave and preoccupied, met the nurse at the station, and began talking to her in subdued tones on the platform.

"Not immediate," he said. "I think it is a question of a few days. But," he added with a sigh, "one can never be sure." The nurse said very little. "Quite so!" "Very true!" she squeaked now and again, but otherwise she sustained an embarrassed silence. She was a tall and good-looking girl, with a fine, fresh complexion. Mark regarded her curiously. She was different, somehow, from the usual type of nurse. What it was he could not say. Perhaps she wore her clothes differently. Perhaps she wasn't a nurse at all. After all, why should she be? They got into the trap together and Mark caught her eye. It was a glad eye, he reflected, no doubt of that. The girl was in good

spirits. Enjoying the joke, no doubt. Of course young Levellier had told her all about it. Telegraphed to London for her, perhaps? She could hardly have been at Northwold, too. Curiously irregular, the whole affair. Even more irregular if she wasn't a nurse. He must get details. Meanwhile the girl smiled at him, showing strong, white teeth, very attractive in their robust way. Mark was suddenly embarrassed. They drove on in silence, and he had the satisfaction of observing that they attracted considerable attention.

The nurse ate a huge luncheon. Mark was inclined to believe that she must be a real nurse after all. Real nurses always had hearty appetites. Two large helpings of roast meat and piled up vegetables! Lucy seemed to be amused by the way the girl demolished her food. Mark intercepted twinkling glances. Not very polite of Lucy, he thought. After lunch she turned to their visitor and remarked gravely that she thought she had better go to her room and rest a little. "You will have so much running about later in the day, nurse," she said. The young woman laughed—a disconcerting, unladylike laugh—and Mark felt uncomfortable. There was something distinctly indelicate, it seemed to him, about all this. A double indelicacy. It was indelicate that this young woman should be mixed up in this business *en rapport* with him; it was indelicate that young Levellier should be mixed up in it *en rapport* with his sister. Mark wished he had not been so easily persuaded. Lucy could have found some other way. Audacity was all very well, but this new fashion of disregarding all natural instinct! Mark was twelve years older than his sister, and the difference of outlook between twenty-two and thirty-four is nowadays enormous. Yes, the situation was very trying. And why was that absurd nurse so silent? She hardly spoke a word. She made things even more trying than they naturally would be. It was all preposterous. He would go out for a walk.

On the path by the sea he ran into the only person whom he knew to speak to, the doctor who had lately come from Hoddesley.

"Ah, Trenton," he exclaimed, looking grave and troubled.

Dr. Trenton surveyed him considerably. "My dear man," he said, "I hope nothing is wrong. I hear that a nurse came down to-day by the eleven-thirty to-day to your house. I do trust—"

"Oh, no—no," Mark faltered, shifting his eyes uneasily. "Nothing wrong. Nothing—er—nothing whatever. The nurse is—oh, well, she's a friend of the family, you know. In a sort of way. Down here for a change. Nice healthy place, eh? He! he!" he giggled feebly. The doctor stared at him.

"I'm very glad," he replied coldly, "that there's nothing amiss. I was afraid from your manner—"

"Oh, no, no, dear me!" the other broke in. "Nothing in the world! But I must get on. I have a train to catch—to meet, I mean. The doctor is coming by the three-fifteen, at least, that is—not exactly—"

"The doctor!" Trenton was entirely taken aback.

"Oh, yes, a friend of the nurse's, you know. He wants a change, too. I told him this was such a nice healthy place. Such good air," he whispered confidentially, "so fresh. And, you see, we're not quite well—not really well. So it's killing two birds with one stone, as the saying goes. If we should be ill, we have the doctor and the nurse—and in any case they have the air and the change and all that. Splendid arrangement. Ha! ha!"

Trenton's eyes grew wider and wider. Evidently, he thought, Holland's mind was unhinged. Something serious must have happened. "Good morning," he said abruptly, and left him.

Mark did not go to the station. He felt he could not face the station again. Young Levellier could find his way to the "Crown" by himself. He would look in there later and ask him to come up and have tea. How about tea,

though? Could he face tea *à quatre*—*à un tel quatre*? Confound it! Really the remedy was worse than the disease. Of course he was hopelessly Victorian, he had no idea that he was Victorian to quite that degree. Still, it would soon be over. After all the remedy would only take a few days, whereas those social persecutions—that “invasion of his personality”—would last for ages. He must make the best of it. So on the way back from his walk he called at the “Crown” and asked for Dr. Levellier. Dr. Levellier, he was told, was out—“with the nuss.” The waiter thought they were on the Promenade. He lowered his voice discreetly. Mark wondered why. For a moment he stood irresolutely on the pavement outside the hotel. Then “Damn it!” he muttered. “I’ll go after them. Why shouldn’t I?”

Young Levellier, when he met him a few minutes later, was alone, and in uproarious spirits. “What a jest!” he exclaimed. “Better than anything we ever did at the *Footlights*. Wish you weren’t so Oxford, Mr. Holland. No Oxford man can ever understand a lark. I tell you we’re having the time of our lives! Just sent the nurse off to get some prescriptions made up at your garrulous chemist’s, and to buy one or two little things as well. My word, what fun! Most of the inhabitants have been carefully examining us from their windows. By Jove,” he added, “there’s an old boy staring at us now. Mustn’t laugh. Must be grave, not gay, must be severe and sublime. Good work!”

“You’d better come and have tea with us. It’s about half-past four.”

“Tea?” Levellier inclined his head toward the other, lowering his voice and adopting a very serious tone. “Yes, I think, upon the whole, you know, all things considered, I will take tea. Deeply indebted to you. Tea, my friend, what shall we say about tea?” And he went on in earnest consultation as they walked together in full view of the resident population.

Mark was getting reconciled, he

played his part. Everything seemed to be progressing according to schedule.

III

SOME discussion took place about the details of the grand *finale*. Eventually Levellier had most of his way. He was in favor of the hour of two a.m. Mark must call for him then at the “Crown,” in hot haste, with terrific ringing of bells and banging of doors. Levellier would dress at lightning speed, emerging in five minutes, pale, anxious and rather dishevelled, clutching a little black professional-looking bag. The nurse would meet them, with clasped hands, on the doorstep of the house. If any of the servants wakened, the nurse would reassure them in trembling tones, telling them to stay in their rooms, everything was all right. Then, of course, they would listen carefully through their keyholes. After a while Mark was to be sent out again for Dr. Trenton, because Levellier would decide that he couldn’t take entire responsibility. When Trenton arrived all would be over—safely over. Levellier would interview Trenton in the study, apologize duly, explain how it was, dreadful business and all that, but he knew he could rely on his secrecy. Trenton would bow, with stern set face, and leave the house without a word. Meanwhile the nurse undertook to mew like a new-born babe, and swore she could do it quite convincingly. Next day the ghastly truth would be all over the town.

Mark was in for it now. He could not repress every qualm, but he was in for it. He found that he rather liked the nurse, too. She was a great deal more sensible and less irritating than most women, she talked very little—he found a virtue in that now—she kept herself in the background, she was a useful, unobtrusive girl. Not vain of her good looks either. Yes, he liked her. But two a.m.! Why two a.m.? Mark shivered. Make it midnight, he urged, he could comfortably sit up till midnight. Besides the servants would

wake more easily then. Levellier ended by compromising for one o'clock.

IV

THE days that followed the *coup* provided a number of new sensations. First the cook gave notice, and her example was rapidly followed by the parlour-maid. It was a good place, they had no complaints, but poor girls must consider their characters. Fortunately the remaining servant could cook. Mark at once raised her wages to a preposterous figure. A very old and perfectly deaf charwoman consented to come in by the day. Things were sometimes rather sketchy, but they all enjoyed it. Lucy's dressing-room became the dining-room and neither the maid nor the charwoman were allowed anywhere near it. The nurse was invaluable. She helped the maid to cook, and took up all the meals. Mark would follow her very gravely, carrying his own tray in front of him with a ritualistic air. Dr. Levellier frequently joined them for lunch or dinner. Levellier's manner to the nurse, Mark thought, was often unduly familiar. He took her by the shoulder once or twice in a way that Mark didn't like at all—a gross touch, he considered it. But he had no fault to find with Levellier's manner to Lucy. There the young man behaved admirably.

The preliminaries of the baby's first airing provided general entertainment. The infant was manufactured out of a collection of the kind of articles that are usually found at a Jumble Sale. An embroidered centre-piece, gift of some aunt, a pair of old boots, a handful of old neckties, a couple of broken pipes, an Indian shawl that Lucy particularly disliked, a blanket and other etceteras all served their turn. A certain fastidious æsthetic sense entered into the composition of the bundle. From the utilitarian point of view almost any kind of a bundle, so long as sufficiently in the right way bundly, would have done; but the nurse and Lucy dwelt on that simulacrum of a babe with loving care and art. The two pipes were delicately

adjusted for the representation of the little feet,

"That on the roses of the dawn have Erod,"

as Mark quoted when he took them down with gentle reluctance from their immemorial places in the pipe-rack.

When the baby was complete they suddenly realized that they had forgotten to buy a perambulator. Mark plunged for the door of the dressing-room. "I'll go out and buy it," he cried. He was ready for anything now. The scheme had succeeded admirably, the story had spread near and far in a few hours, he met everywhere with looks of cold aversion and disdain, there was now no possible question of those calls being returned, and Mark was overwhelmingly, immeasurably, fantastically grateful—purged, he declared, of all Victorian leaven. Yes, he would buy the perambulator, that would be the final touch. "*Ne manque que cela!*" he exclaimed, waving his handkerchief excitedly in the air.

"Yes," said Levellier, "this will be the consummation. It's three o'clock and a beautiful afternoon. Everyone will be about all over the place. Will you be considered shameless, do you think, Holland—or merely heroic?"

"Heroic? Heroic?" Mark blinked at him uneasily. "I hope not heroic. Good heavens, Levellier, you don't think, do you, that there's any possibility of people 'coming round'? We shan't live this thing down, shall we? They won't end up by being tolerant and large-minded—Christian charity and all that kind of thing? If you think there's any danger of my being considered heroic, I won't go for the perambulator. We can send Mabel—"

"No, not Mabel," Levellier objected. "Emphatically not Mabel. We must not try her too far. She has stood by us in the hour of our shame and her raise of wages, stood by us wonderfully, but we should not trespass on her loyalty. We cannot let a young and innocent girl buy a perambulator for such a baby as ours." He indicated the bundle with

a dramatic wave of the hand. "No," he concluded, "we must go. I will support you. We must face it out, even at the risk of being considered heroic."

They went; the perambulator was ordered with the hesitation of an extreme embarrassment.

"Have you by any chance," Mark began, and then breaking off, he turned desperately to Levellier. "What was it that we wanted? I cannot recall—" He mopped his brow with his handkerchief.

Levellier hesitated in his turn. "Let me see," he replied, shifting from one leg to the other, "Ah—yes. Do you happen to have—" he leaned over the counter and spoke in a hoarse whisper, "such a thing as a—er—well, as a—er—*perambulator* anywhere about you?"

They insisted on taking it home with them. One on each side they wheeled it home, with a shamed and dejected air, producing a marked impression on all spectators. They wheeled it very badly, they were continually tripping over the wheels and over each other, and they often nearly ran into the wall. Their aspect, however, remained tragic.

At a short distance from the house they came upon Dr. Trenton unexpectedly round the corner. Mark hurriedly averted his head, and started to describe a deprecating semi-circular sweep with the perambulator. Trenton stepped briskly out, with an air of manly determination. Mark felt an agitated hand on his shoulder.

"Holland!" Both men turned. Gravely, sadly, they faced the speaker. "I was coming," he went on with a catch in his throat, "I was coming to see you." He extended his hand; Mark grasped it, choking with emotion. They walked in silence to the house. There seemed to be nothing to say. Mark and Levellier cudged their brains in great perplexity. How to deal with this situation? Here was a new problem.

V

THEY took Dr. Trenton into the morning-room. Mark started back

shocked. Lucy was there! How very imprudent! She had been threatening to come down earlier in the day and they had dissuaded her. But here she was. She must have seen them through the window, fortunately, for she was lying on the sofa as they came in, covered with a shawl, very much an invalid. She gave a suppressed moan, beautifully done, as the door opened.

"I beg your pardon," Trenton stammered, "forgive my intrusion. I did not know—"

"We had better withdraw," Levellier interposed hastily. "Miss Holland is really not sufficiently recovered—"

Trenton hesitated. "If I might," he said, "for only a very few minutes I have something important to say. It might, I think, be a certain relief to Miss Holland. Nurse—" the young woman joined them at that moment and he turned to her, "I ask your permission—"

The nurse glanced at Lucy, who nodded her head feebly. "I can see Dr. Trenton," she murmured.

Trenton advanced; the others remained rather apprehensively by the door. The doctor flushed suddenly and cleared his throat.

"Miss Holland," he declared, "words cannot express my sense of your courage. You have claimed your right—the most sacred and inalienable right of woman—that of giving birth to a child. You have carried out fearlessly your supreme duty—the supreme duty of your sex. It is nothing—I repeat it is nothing—" he warmed and flung out his hand—"that you have not chosen to take a husband. This is immaterial. Your being married or unmarried is no one's business but yours. I hold," his eyes flashed, "that it is an impertinence to enquire of a woman as to the parentage of her children—the grossest possible impertinence!"

Lucy moved on her sofa. "No, no, Dr. Trenton," she protested weakly. "I cannot agree with you. Your views are wrong, indeed they are, they are wrong and wicked. I deserve my pun-

ishment. I am ready to pay the penalty."

A horrible croaking sound broke from the nurse. Dr. Trenton turned abruptly and raised his eyebrows. The poor creature, he thought, must be hysterical. A nurse should be better trained. Lucy hid her face in her hands.

"And I," Trenton continued, "am ready to do all in my power to diminish the weight of that penalty so unjustly inflicted. What will you do with the child?"

There was a dead silence.

"Tell me—" he lowered his voice to a pitch of the most grave profound, "what will you do with the child?"

Mark groaned, and again the nurse began to croak. "Poor woman," thought Trenton, "after all, it is natural enough."

It was Lucy who at length answered the question. "He has been sent away," she said quietly, "to a Home."

"A Home!" Trenton's tone was indignant. "How could you make such a concession to our base conventions? Forgive my frankness of speech, but indeed I feel most strongly. This is the only immoral thing that has been done! To send away your baby—to forego your right that is heaven-born! To deprive him of a mother's care, to leave him an alien among strangers! Oh, Miss Holland, how could you do this thing? At this moment, perhaps, he is drinking some repulsive patent concoction from a bottle held by hireling hands! Horrible!"

The nurse brought her handkerchief furiously into play, and edged nearer the door. Lucy was guiltless of a single tremor.

"How willingly," the doctor went on, "would I have adopted it—how willingly would I win, even now, the right to adopt it!"

The nurse went hurriedly out.

"I am speaking," Trenton resumed, "before your brother and this gentleman, but in a case like this I do not shrink from their presence. So much the better that they should hear what I have to say. When I was in this

house, a few nights ago, I could say nothing. I was bewildered, distracted, and besides it was not the moment for speech. But ever since then, by day and by night, continually, I have been gathering my thoughts together, I have been coming to know myself. It has been the most wonderful, the most creative experience of my life. The sentiments that I previously entertained for you, Miss Holland—that I have entertained since our first meeting at Hoddesley two years ago—they were sentiments, of course, of respect and regard, but in these last few days everything has been changed—transformed. My former feelings have been—er transmuted by admiration for qualities of the spirit—your courage, your fortitude, your true womanliness—"

A crash was heard from the room above. "Good Heavens!" Mark ejaculated, seeking relief from the embarrassment into which Trenton's declaration had thrown him, "somebody's in my room!"

"I repeat," the doctor continued with unchecked vigour, "I feel for you, Miss Holland, that kind of devotion which every man and every woman must recognize as unmistakable. It is the devotion on which alone true marriage can be based. It is a devotion based itself on philanthropic and on moral grounds. I offer myself to you, here and now. I ask for the right to be the father of your child."

Lucy looked at him with wide eyes. She really was a little pale now. "My dear doctor," she faltered. "I appreciate this very deeply—very deeply indeed. But have you thought—have you considered . . . ? Marriage?"

"Ah, do not misunderstand me. Of course I do not insist upon marriage. I am quite prepared to be as courageous as you. A free union—if you will—"

"No, no!" Mark interposed energetically. "I could not sanction that."

"Well, well," Trenton was a little impatient, "this is a minor point. If you knew what an education these last few days have been to me! As to mar-

riage or no marriage, I am entirely at your disposal."

Levellier looked at Lucy. She seemed agitated, whether genuinely or not he could not tell.

"Sir," said the young man, "I think the present situation is too much for Miss Holland. As her doctor I feel I must ask you not to prolong it."

Trenton grasped his hat. "Not for a moment," he cried, "would I do any thing that might be injurious to Miss Holland. I have spoken. I will leave her at once. I think," he added, gently, "that I may feel there is some hope."

"No hope what—ever!" It was a strong resonant voice that rang through the room as the door opened. The intruder was a young man, a tall and good-looking young man, with a fine, fresh complexion. "Thank Heaven!" was his next exclamation, "I haven't got to squeak any more!"

"My clothes!" Mark shouted in consternation. Dr. Trenton was dumb-founded.

"Lucy!" Mark addressed his sister with an attempt at indignation. "The nurse! My trousers fit her abominably."

"I am very sorry," the young man was beginning to be a little embarrassed now that the first flare was over. "I'm afraid I've created a scene. But I really couldn't let things go any further. I—"

"You see," Lucy interposed, "I am very sorry too, Dr. Trenton, but I am engaged to be married to Mr. Victor Meyrick."

Trenton stared at her. His mouth dropped and he passed his hand over his forehead. Mark gaped too.

"Victor Meyrick!" he cried. "And who in thunder is Victor Meyrick?"

"There he is by the door!" Lucy's eyes sparkled. Her color had returned, and she looked the picture of health as she rose from the sofa. "Dr. Trenton, I'll confess everything. But really, you can judge well enough for yourself. There hasn't been any baby—except *that*." She pointed to the preposterous bundle, hitherto concealed under the

shawl, but fallen to the ground as she got up.

Trenton crumpled his hat in his hand. "No baby! An imposition," he flushed, angrily, "a most gross and unpardonable imposition! You mean to say that you have been perfectly respectable all the time?"

Lucy was very propitiatory. "How could we tell," she said, "that you would call and express these opinions? I never had any idea that you had such opinions. How very shocking that you should!" Her eyes smiled irresistibly.

Trenton did not reply. He walked with great dignity to the door.

"Oh, I say!" Mark approached him with an air of entreaty. "Don't cut up rough, will you? Don't give us away. They'll all come calling on me again if you do. I know they will! Couldn't you be godfather, or something nice of that kind? I don't mean, of course, to *that*." He pointed to the bundle, and Trenton gave an exclamation of indignant annoyance. "Not to that, my dear sir, but to the real one. You are going to have one or two, I suppose, aren't you?" He appealed to his sister.

"Oh, yes, quite likely," she agreed. "Do be godfather, dear Dr. Trenton, won't you, to the very first?"

"Godfather! I consider this immodest!" Dr. Trenton marched out of the room, Mark following with vain attempts to placate him.

The front door slammed.

Mark returned with an air of grave dejection. He sat down in front of the young man and stared blankly at his legs. "My trousers!" he said again.

"I apologize." Meyrick was recovering his sang-froid. "I apologize, humbly. But please let me wear them till I get back to London. I'll return them then without fail."

Lucy clapped her hands. "Let's all go up to London tomorrow," she cried, "to get our special license!" She was radiant, and embraced her discomfited brother with unusual warmth.

"You must insist," Levellier put in, "on your husband's going on the stage!" He did pretty well in the old *Footlights*

days, at Cambridge, but he has come on wonderfully since."

"No wonder he took you in, Mark," Lucy continued, to console him. "He dressed up as a girl one May Week and went all over the town, and nobody found him out."

"Well, well," Mark responded, plaintively. "I must say though, that I don't see what I get out of this. I lose my favorite trousers temporarily, and my only sister forever. Still, I suppose, we've had what Levellier calls a lark. Sequel—you go and get married. Then when there's no further need of me as a chaperon, I come back to this place to be called on. Trenton will probably give the whole show away. I am abused, I am shamefully abused." He began filling his pipe."

"Never mind!" Lucy's exhilaration could not be diminished. "We'll have a good time in town tomorrow. Dinner at the Café Boule and a theatre afterwards."

Mark rose heavily. "I observe," he said, "that my health is no longer considered with quite the same solicitude. No matter! I give my consent. Laugh, Levellier, laugh. That is a joke. I lead myself as a lamb to the sacrifice. The future can take care of itself. No doubt if you come and stay with me later on, and if I've lived the lark down by then, you'll hit on some surer means of making me a social outcast. That's my condition. Promise me that, and I give way on all points. Very well! Agreed!"

Lucy flung her arms around him. "Splendid!" she cried. "You're splendid! But don't you all think I'm splendid, too? Many a man has married his nurse, but never a woman! You see how we usurp all their prerogatives."

"H'm, yes," Mark grunted. "And, you know—I have to confess it—I was rather beginning to think of marrying the nurse myself!"



DISILLUSIONMENT

By John W. Mason, Jr.

SHE was nineteen and popular and beloved. One loved her because of her beauty; another, because of her good taste in dress; still another, because of her cleverness.

The first saw her one morning as she came from the beach. Her hair was wet and stringy, and the water had removed a bit of the artificial aid which she always gave to her unusually perfect complexion.

The second learned that her mother selected all of her clothes.

The third discovered the book that contained a great deal of her most charmingly original repartee.

And I, I was content that my rivals be thus turned aside. For I loved the beauty of her love-lit eyes; the taste of her wonderful lips; her cleverness in loving me.



INCIDENTAL

By Alice P. Raphael

AS he stood at the top of the Museum high steps, blinking a little at the strong sunlight while he fixed his slightly near-sighted eyes upon the passengers who descended from the swaying motor-buses, he had the air of a large and pallid bird who pecks now here, now there, at an unexpected grain of corn.

The sun spread itself unstintingly upon the smooth marble which flaunted its white expanse across the entrance of the park and his eyes wandered from the intermittent motor-buses, over and above the façade, comparing it casually with impressions of his last winter in Europe. The comparison suffered, for he fostered a decided antagonism to his native endeavors and this self-pleasing cultivation of a European veneer, this desire to seem of the older civilization in spite of his affiliations with the new, was partly accountable for his protracted stand upon the Museum steps that morning.

Reviewing his brief and unexpected encounter with Lilla the previous evening, he wondered what impulse had led him to suggest this place of meeting, and then he remembered that the last of their many good-byes had taken place upon the steps of a similar Museum. Thus regarded, the adventure seemed to slur over the lapse of years with a certain careless ease, with which he was secretly pleased. But delay raised the question, what after all, did he expect of Lilla? It is not every man, he reflected, who can renew his friendship with his first mistress with the unassumed calm with which he awaited her; of that he was convinced. His years in Europe had not been wasted.

And as he saw her crossing the street, with the same slow gait, measurely assertive, deliberately self-protective as she passed cautiously between the vehicles, he re-doubled the question, "What, after all, did he expect of Lilla, and what is more, what did she expect of him?" There was no quickening of the pulse, however, as he went down the steps to meet her, merely an intensified interest in the situation; but he was rather shocked when he perceived that the small boy on the step beside her was actually accompanying her. Somehow he had never thought of Lilla as a mother; it upset his conception of Lilla as his mistress, granting that subconsciously he had been revolving whether he might, if she again attracted him.

And while she climbed the steps, idly answering his casual questions he glanced at the boy again, and something in his near-sighted gaze prompted the sudden misgiving of his heart, who's child was he?

They entered the Museum and chose a bench in the room of the early Italian masters. Lilla spread herself as she sat down with a sigh of relief, fanning incessantly with a foolish little handkerchief.

"Why did you bring the boy?" he asked, abruptly.

"Why not?" said Lilla, calmly, and resumed her fanning.

He was as much disturbed by Lilla's complacent relaxation as by the unuttered question in his mind. People ought never to cool themselves in public, contrasting the hot and perspiring young woman at his side with the memory of his first mistress. And as he sat there, leaning forward a little upon his

slender cane, he seemed to take on the appearance of a slightly decaying gardenia. His romance, so crisp and reminiscently fragrant, had suddenly developed brown edges and the faintly stagnant odor of decay.

"Drat the boy," he thought, and let his eyes rest soothingly upon the Botticelli before him. It was an unusually lovely one but the exaggerated reverence of the bowing angels, the wistful adoration of the Madonna, stiffened his present mood into an antipathy to motherhood in whatsoever guise it revealed itself. He looked at the opposite wall and met the same atmosphere of spiritual detachment in a Perugino conspicuous for the purity of its Madonna. He felt himself surrounded by cloying sweetness, by such an excess of sentiment that for the moment he could hardly look at the pictures and he was resentful, in almost a personal manner of the awe and admiration which was being lavished upon the Holy Child. It gave him the sensation of being the only man at an afternoon tea where the women were all discussing babies.

"Let's go into one of the other rooms," he said jumping up quickly.

Lilla rose with a sigh, she was just beginning to be comfortable. The boy went noisily along with them, absorbed in jumping upon alternate squares of the parquet floor. They came into the opulence of the Renaissance and here he was confronted with vigorous young women who portrayed a more healthy and satisfying aspect of maternity. There was something of Lilla, he thought, in the large Raphael Madonna, something in the bland contour of the face which suggested a poise of mind as well as of body, somewhat of the assurance which had enabled her to conceal their protracted romance with such success.

And now, while the boy occupied himself in the far corner of the room, they spoke of the events which had occurred to each in the intervening years; yet as Lilla talked, seemingly candid, she always managed to parry the direction of his questions and so avoided receiving

the only one to which he really desired an answer. He could hardly believe it, and yet of course, it was perfectly plausible and he could dove-tail any amount of circumstantial evidence either for or against his possible paternity, but that gave him no satisfaction. He wanted the facts from Lilla, and she seemed not only oblivious of his desires, but almost oblivious of him. Therein lay the clue to their present situation and possibly the solution to Lilla. For her discontent with the confines of the small town and her estrangement from her husband were no longer matters of disturbance; she had in some mysterious manner rounded out the circle of her personality. And as the boy, now bored, sidled up to her she placed an arm around his shoulder of such ample self-satisfied motherhood that he was completely taken aback. In that moment he knew that the question of his future relationship to her was a dead issue, buried in the past which forbade a resurrection.

So they discussed the pictures. In each instance Lilla's interest was centered in the child. It either was or was not "a fine looking boy." He began to think that he would soon be an authority on the physical merits of childhood and rather boredly he remarked, "Perhaps you would care to see the Museum. There are, I believe, some fine pictures in the other room."

They strolled on, a disjointed trio. Lilla, pleasantly interested, enjoyed each picture with exasperating detail of attention. The boy was always slightly ahead of them, sliding in and out the winding rooms. They met the Van Dyke Madonnas, they passed the opulent Rubens Mothers; at the Murillos he hung back but without success, and a little later when Lilla spied a Bouguereau, with unfeigned enthusiasm she had almost to lead him up to it.

Wherever he turned, he met this insistent appeal of the mother and child until art seemed only a concentration of the one idea and life but a repetition of it. It was as if every artist had taken a squeeze out of the same tube of paint and applied it to his own particular can-

vas, and there was no place in any picture for masculine attributes either; that also upset his standards that morning. As a man he felt completely out of it, he was but an incident in the story. He might, if he chose, figure as an incipient apostle, but at best he was merely an attendant, prostrated before the consummation of the divine.

And when they came out into the open air and Lilla discovered that it was later than she had intended it to be and hurried herself into another green motor-bus with pleasant protestations, he found himself chatting quite vivaciously with a certain real pleasure in having seen her once more, though at the bottom of his heart lay the pleasing certainty that he would never see her

again. And at that he even patted the boy on his head, remarking to Lilla that he was "a fine looking boy."

At which Lilla smiled subtly; at least he thought she did—afterwards. It was while he waved to her rapidly disappearing handkerchief, that the memory of her smile returned to him. Then he recollected that after all he had not found out whether the child was his or not; like a flash the host of Madonnas he had seen that afternoon rushed into his mind and were focused into one gigantic picture of motherhood, and in that picture there was no glimps of the father. It came to him just then that even if he did know, it would really make no difference. Perhaps, after all, he had been only incidental.



THE LITERARY SUPPLY AND DEMAND

By Hal Stanley

THE AUTHORS

STRUGGLING ones; those who have arrived; fiction mongers who are written out; popular novelists; poets; minor singers; elegists; rhymesters; banalists; cub reporters submitting their first manuscripts; country editors sending return postage for the 1,000th time; girls, still uninformed, imitating Laura Jean Libby; roués soiling clean paper with smutty epigrams; persons turning from meagre jobs to writing for a worse living; humorists writing seriously; worn-out intellects kicking up heavy heels; satirists fearful of being kindly; optimists unaware that they are licked; odd Dicks; faddists; plagiarists; plumbers; manicures; geniuses.

THE PUBLIC

Dullards, some; discriminators, others; tall girls eating nougat while they read; mothers determinedly deleting for daughters; young boys embarrassed by slushy plots; old maids partial to villains; plain people pleased at anything; babies who are read to; prudes who unravel sex problems behind locked doors; stenographers who substitute employers for heroes; employers who are decent during business hours; dentists with cruel hands; typesetters; florists; masseurs; electricians; caterers; school teachers; milliners; underwriters; decorators; stationers and actors.



ACCORDING TO THE BEST SELLERS

By Lilith Benda

NO man, no matter if the tenderest, the most beautiful, the wittiest of women be the object of his mature passion, ever finds the thought of her quite so exquisite, quite as soul-uplifting as the memory of that little girl—the coachman's daughter or the gamekeeper's ward—with whom he used to sit among the daisies, under God's own sky, and build castles in the air, long, long ago—

No wife who has gone through poverty and suffering with her husband, is ever quite happy when they arrive at a stage where three square meals a day, fetching frocks for her, and a comfortable home come as a matter of course. She longs always for the good old days, "the days of our struggles, Arthur, the days before we drifted apart, when we were all in all to each other—"

No stenographer of forty, fat, homely, efficient and congenitally adapted in every way to her lot, is ever thoroughly content with her tranquil, money-getting celibacy. She longs for the romance of which life has cheated her; she, too, yearns to live if only for a day; she, too, wants "music and soft lights, and the perfume of roses"; she, too, must have "one perfect hour."

No clown ever went forth to his antics without a secret sorrow gnawing at his heart. There is always his love, "an exquisite little creature riding bareback with elfin grace," who is philandering with the mustachioed ring-master, and as he bravely begins his quips and sallies, there are tears behind the laughter, revenge in his breast.

No woman may be subtle who does not exhale "some strange, Oriental perfume," who is not "completely swathed

in velvet and sables," and who does not "smile her cryptic smile."

No poet, no musician, no painter, be he the mightiest of artists, ever gives any hint of the calibre that has made him great: and no such man has ever conceived an immortal work except in a squalid attic, with starvation and cold for his handmaidens.

No two men, friends for years, companions through good and ill fortune, and with a genuine affection responsible for their long association, may maintain their comradeship after she appears, "with her wistful, little mouth, her clear blue eyes pure as the soul they reveal, and the sweet, wholesome allure of her dainty ways."

No girl ever sat, hungry, in her hall bedroom with anything but horror in her heart at the thought of a good meal in a banker's apartment that evening.

No "woman of culture" cares for anything but Puccini, and Debussy, and Chopin—the Chopin of the nocturnes—and Shelley, and Corot, and Victor Hugo; no woman may be genuinely fond of Rabelais, or of Franz Hals' pictures of fat roysterers, and little red-cheeked jades with half a bun on—or of *Til Eulenspiegel*.

And, finally, no man is ever fascinated by anything other than the tenderness, the beauty, the exotic allure, or sweet clean-mindedness of his lady-love: no man may be attracted to a pretty girl who knows the difference between Pschorrbräu and American beer, between a funny story and a raw one, and who enjoys nothing better than *Parsifal*, with a fox-trot between the acts at a nearby tango tea joint.

IT

THE USUAL PLAY WITH AN UNUSUAL ENDING

By Richard Florance

Cast

HE.

SHE.

IT.

SCENE, a study. The curtain goes up on a luxurious but empty room, while the audience fusses in its seat and becomes reasonably quiet and resigned. Then He and She come from a tour of His rooms, into His study. She is also wearing a little hat. She stands at the door and looks around ecstatically. She claps her hands.

SHE

I think the whole place is just too cute for anything.

HE

Yes?

SHE

And isn't it just the wickedest thing for me to be here!

HE

I don't know. Is it?

SHE

Yes. It's like a book. I love it!

HE

"Alice in Wonderland"?

SHE

Mm. Only it's much more romantic. It's more like a princess and an ugly old ogre.

HE

Hm. Thanks.

SHE

Oh, dear! You're not a bit ugly!

HE

Thanks!

SHE

Oh! I didn't mean that! (*Blushes enthusiastically.*)

HE

(*Laughs*) Shall I ring for tea? (*He goes to the button and rings.*)

SHE

(*Doubtfully*) I really oughtn't to stay a minute!

HE

Not even a little minute?

SHE

Well—a little weentsy one. (*Butler appears.*)

HE

Tea, Donald. (*Butler disappears.*)

HE

(*Goes to the wine closet and pulls out a few bottles. He starts to mix a cocktail.*) You must let me mix you a cocktail.

SHE

Oh, no!

HE

Really! It's perfectly all right. Besides, it's done, you know—

SHE

I oughtn't to—

HE

Nonsense. A regular housewarming. Come. Tea is so tame. A cocktail is lots more naughty.

SHE

Well—

HE

(*Gives HER a glass.*) Here. (HE fills one for himself. SHE sips hers. HE gulps his.)

SHE

It isn't at all bad.

HE

Of course not! I learnt to mix that in Paris.

SHE

In Paris? Really? It's awfully good.

HE

Another?

SHE

Oh, no!

HE

Well—you'll excuse me? (HE drinks another. SHE wanders about the room, looking at everything with child-like curiosity.)

SHE

When were you in Paris?

HE

The last time?

SHE

Have you been there often?

HE

I used to live there a while ago. Had a little place in the Quarter.

SHE

The Quarter?

HE

The Quartier Latin.

SHE

Of course. Oh—I'd just love to live in Paris! (*They are wandering about the room together.*)

HE

Well—want to go over with me?

SHE

(*Taken aback*) Why—how silly! (*Balancing again, she laughs.*) My husband would have something to say to that, I guess.

HE

Yes. So he might.

SHE

(*Looking at a picture*) Oh—who is the exciting-looking old man?

HE

An ancestor of mine.

SHE

How perfectly thrilling! Isn't he the ferocious old thing!

HE

He used to lure lovely maidens up into his castle and pounce on them! Boo! (*HE pounces at her.*)

SHE

(*Dodges behind a table*) Oh! How you frightened me! (*HE laughs to reassure her.*)

HE

You aren't afraid of me, are you?

SHE

Of course not! (*SHE comes out from behind the table with some bravado. The Butler enters unobtrusively with the tea. He puts it on the table and as unobtrusively retires.*)

HE

Here's the tea. (*Draws up a chair for HER. HE brings the bottles over from the wine closet, and sits down opposite HER. SHE serves the tea prettily.*)

SHE

One lump or two?

HE
Three, please.

SHE
Goodness! . . . Lemon or cream?

HE
Neither. Just plain.

SHE
Aren't you odd!

HE
(*Leaning forward*) Am I odd?

SHE
(*A little embarrassed*) Why—no—
not particularly. . . . (*Laughs and
passes him the cup. HE takes it, and
SHE pours tea for herself, with one
lump and a good deal of cream.*)

HE
It's awfully good to have you here!

SHE
Really?

HE
Really!

SHE
Poor Henry—he'd just die if he
knew!

HE
He's a silly old thing—

SHE
You mustn't say that. He's a dear.
But it is such fun to run away from a
husband just once and be wicked.

HE
(*Leaning forward*) Wicked?

SHE
(*Innocently*) Of course! Isn't it
wicked for a married woman to take tea
with a man she's just met—all alone?

HE
Oh, well . . . Pfah! (*HE pushes
his barely tasted tea aside, and pours
himself a mixture from the array of
gay bottles.*) . . . That's better.

SHE
Tell me . . .

HE
Yes?

SHE
Oh, nothing.

HE
Nonsense! What is it?

SHE
No—really—it's nothing.

HE
Tell me!

SHE
Why—it isn't anything. It's just
foolish.

HE
Yes?

SHE
Do many women come here like this
. . . to take tea with you?

HE
(*Repressing a smile*) Oh—why—
no—

SHE
Why not? I don't believe it!

HE
Well—well—you see, I have the rep-
utation of being rather an ogre. I—er
—like to pounce on little children and—
ah—eat 'em!

SHE
I don't believe you'd eat anybody.

HE
Oh—I don't know!

SHE
You wouldn't eat me, Mr. Ogre!

HE
Perhaps I will.

SHE
Oh, no. Because there's always a
Prince to come in at the last minute and
kill the ogre.

HE
(*Ruefully*) Yes—the ogre is an un-
fortunate creature. (*Drinks.*) Here's
to the ogre, poor thing. May he be
constantly supplied with Princesses!

SHE

What an awful toast! (*Raising her cup*) Here's to the Prince. May he always rescue the Princess!

HE

Would you want to be rescued?

SHE

(*Archly*) Well—if it were an awfully handsome Prince—

HE

Little flirt!

SHE

I hope not! It would break my husband's heart.

HE

I suppose he thinks that you're a real old-fashioned creature, eh?

SHE

Yes. I'd never have any fun at all!

HE

(*Hitches his chair nearer to her*) You ought to have lots of fun. All the time.

SHE

I think so. . . . My husband's bald.

HE

(*Sympathetically*) That's zippy rotten, isn't it?

SHE

I know it.

HE

(*Taking her hand*) You are so beautiful. You ought always to have Romance about you.

SHE

Oh—you mustn't—

HE

That little hand—a Prince might bend over—

SHE

(*Laughing*) Or an ogre.

HE

Yes—an ogre. I'm an ogre, and I'm going to eat you (*Kisses her hand.*)

SHE

(*Faintly*) Oh, you mustn't!

HE

(*Kisses her hand again*) Yes!

SHE

(*Drawing her hand away, somewhat shaken*) No. Please don't.

HE

(*Disappointedly*) Well. (*He drinks and then leans back in his chair and laughs.*) Scare cat!

SHE

I'm not a scare cat!

HE

Am I really such an ogre?

SHE

Please! You know it isn't that. But it isn't right to let you kiss my hand like—that.

HE

Mm. But it's lots of fun!

SHE

Do you know I really think you're dangerous.

HE

(*Inelegantly but comfortably*) Aren't I? It's perfectly wonderful to be so dangerous!

But SHE is a little bit nervous. SHE rises and walks to the table. SHE fusses with some papers. SHE takes up a copy of Le Rire and stares at it, fascinated. SHE puts it down suddenly and blushes.

HE

You get some awfully good ideas out of that!

SHE

Oh!

HE

Of course, Strindberg and all that sort of thing is out of date. To be really wicked nowadays you have to get terribly drunk. Otherwise you're apt to be just *Town Topics*!

Oh!
SHE

There is an uncomfortable silence. SHE peeks at Le Rire when SHE thinks that HE isn't looking. HE smiles sardonically.

HE
I have a fascinating little magazine in the other room. Wait a moment—I'll get it for you. (*Starts to rise.*)

SHE
I think I'd better be getting home,

HE
For goodness' sake, child!

SHE
(*Bubbling with relief*) Good-bye. I've had a perfectly lovely time.

HE
Sit down, goose. You can't go home now!

SHE
(*Scared*) Good-bye.

HE
Why, Donald went out. You wouldn't leave me all alone!

SHE
Let me go!

HE
(*Amazed*) Of course!

SHE
(*In relief, SHE looks at him, but SHE is confused. SHE starts to go, then SHE hangs back. SHE holds out her hand.*)
Good-bye.

(*HE laughs at her. SHE flushes and marches toward a door. It opens into the bedroom. SHE slams it and tries another. It is locked. SHE gasps and cowers at the door. HE looks at her and laughs.*)

HE
By George—that scamp Donald must have locked us in!

SHE
! !
HE
Well, sit down again. We'll have to wait for Donald.

SHE
(*Firmly*) Help!

HE
Silly!

SHE
Help, help!

HE
Idiot!

SHE
Help!
(*HE bounds up and tries to keep her still. They circle the room in melodrama style. SHE screams.*)

HE
For goodness' sake, shut up!
(*HE catches her. The door is flung open, and IT strides into the room.*)

IT
Stop that!
(*HE and SHE stand still and stare at IT, in poses that suggest still-pond no-more-moving. HE glares at IT, and IT glares back at him. IT is a slim young man, dressed like a tango. SHE sobs in relief.*)

HE
Well, who are you?

IT
(*Ironically*) The next time, my fine fellow, I should advise you to lock your door from the inside. . . . Come, madame.

(*SHE starts to go. HE detains her.*)

HE
Just a minute.

IT
Take your hands off that woman!

SHE
Take your hands off me!

HE

I say—I want to know by what right
you come breaking in here.

IT

Never mind. You're drunk. You
leave that woman alone, you brute.
(*To her*) You are safe with me, mad-
ame. If you will follow me. (*Offers
her his arm.*)

HE

(*To her*) Is *that* your husband?

SHE

(*Sobbing*) I told you *he* was bald.

HE

Are you a relative of this woman?

IT

(*Simply*) I am a relative of any
woman in distress.

HE

Oho! Well, then, you get right the
hell out of here!

(*He moves upon IT. IT stands
sternly watching him, like an im-
passive rock. HE reaches IT, and
puts out his fist hard. IT dodges
easily, slightly. Too slightly. IT is
knocked through the doorway in a
graceful parabola. SHE has stopped
crying to watch her deliverer rout
him entirely. Now SHE stands
staring at him, eyes, mouth, nos-
trils wide in dismay. HE carefully
locks the door, and turns around.
HE spreads his arms out over the
door and laughs mockingly.*)

HE

Fee Fi Fo Fum!

QUICK CURTAIN.



TO A LADY

By John McClure

I WILL give to you diamonds and rubies
And pearls in a golden crown:
For a smile of your gray eyes, lady,
I will tumble a mountain down.

I will give to you garlands and roses
And fruit of the blossoming year,
Ay, song-books and poems and posies—
All these will I give you, dear.

I will give you my whole life's treasure,
My flowers of dream and of art—
All things will I give to you, lady,
Saving my heart.



THE CO-RESPONDENT

By Kate L. McLaurin

A FAINT tinkle of the telephone bell cut the silence of the hot, darkened room, and the woman seated by the writing-table started nervously, then waited, tense and strained, for the ring. The little watch at her wrist ticked the seconds away. There was no further sound, and she breathed a sigh of relief. No one wanted her! A hysterical laugh broke from her at the thought. The whole world wanted her—wanted her to tear to pieces.

At this very moment perhaps a hundred reporters were looking for her—shadowing the Fifth Avenue home, invading the country estate, interviewing her lawyers and servants, trying to get in touch with her husband. But they would not find her. She was safe, at least for a little while, in this sordid, downtown hotel. She could think and plan away from curious eyes, away from the constant dread that a reporter would stand before her with the dreadful question on his lips.

Like a sabre cut across her brain was the memory of the first time the question had been put to her. She had come in from the country for a few days' shopping. Fireworks, decorations, favors, many, many things that must be bought for the celebration of the Fourth that was held every year on the grounds of the great Long Island estate.

The town house was closed, and she was at the Plaza. She had breakfasted, was dressing to go out when the telephone rang. Martha was out of the room, so she answered it. It was a reporter from an evening paper. Would she care to make a statement about the Kingdon divorce? "Why?" she asked, with a sudden tightening of the muscles

about the heart. Over the wire came the answer. "Mrs. Kingdon is suing her husband for a divorce and has named you as co-respondent. We thought you—" Abruptly she had hung up the receiver and sat, white and still, gazing out over the expanse of park, while the bell rang persistently.

The rest of the day was dim and confused in her mind. She remembered vaguely the return of Martha, the order to the hotel people that she was at home to no one. There was a consultation with her lawyer. She looked over the evening papers—saw the great headlines that proclaimed her shame. The night brought a wireless from her husband—he was sailing and would be with her Saturday.

Nothing could have brought so sharp a realization of her position as this message from the cold, proud man whose name she bore. It was a name that stood for a long line of distinguished ancestry and one of the great American fortunes, a name that hitherto had been without a blemish. It was his pride, this stainless name, and her great hold on him had been that she filled absolutely his exalted idea of what his wife should be.

Her culture, her high-bred beauty, her charm and tact, by virtue of which she held not only her own circle, but the vast newspaper reading world. For years she had been the heroine of the Sunday editions, the one rich woman held up as a model. Her charity, her civic interest, her patronage of the arts were heralded from one end of the country to the other so that in remote places as well as in the great centers there had grown up a kind of legend

around her beauty and goodness. Here was an example of the good in human nature triumphing over great wealth. And now her great height measured her fall.

Every front page in New York was given over to information concerning her, and where information failed, speculation stepped in. Pictures of her city home, of the country estate, of herself from infancy on, of her husband, with detailed accounts of his life—a revamped description of their marriage: when she at the age of eighteen, the only daughter of a poverty-stricken Baltimore aristocrat, had captured the greatest catch of the country—there was a picture of her in her bridal robes. And in one paper, framed with her at the top of the page, was the face of Mrs. Kingdon, and beneath an interview with the injured wife, in which her wrongs were set forth with spectacular vehemence.

Late that night she left the hotel for another farther down the avenue. Here the reporters found her, and though she was protected from their questions, they announced to an interested world that Mrs. Bainbridge was in hiding here, and crowds gathered about the entrance on the chance of seeing her.

For two days she endured the confinement in her apartment, with no companionship but Martha and her own thoughts. The second night, with the aid of the hotel manager, she escaped to a waiting taxi and was driven to her own home.

The house was closed—the front windows boarded up gave it a dead, inhospitable look. The caretaker let them in through the servants' entrance.

She selected a room at the rear of the house, tried to shut out the past three days, and to sleep, but the wheel on which her thoughts were lashed turned round and round until the torture drove her from her bed to wander over the dark house. She felt her way from room to room, down the stairs, across the marble court to the drawing-room, and here in the cool, musty darkness her nerves quieted and she was

able to think clearly for the first time. For the first time shame and terror yielded to the practical, "How shall I get out of it?"

If she left the house now and waited somewhere until the first train to the country, she might escape the reporters—she would never be able to get away in the daylight. To-morrow they would learn that she was no longer in the hotel and they would immediately besiege the house. Once in the country she would be safe—or could she be sure? The servants would spy on her, the most faithful speculate, and there, in a few days, would come her husband.

No aspect of the case was more frightful to consider than the effect of this thing on him, and the first meeting between them. How would he take it—what would he say? She realized how little she knew of the man who had been her husband for fourteen years. He was ten years older than she—pride and stern conventional morality his strongest characteristics. Even if he believed her innocent he would never forgive her for the shame that had been brought upon him. His wife, Mrs. Hartley Bainbridge, a co-respondent in a vulgar divorce—a case that involved people not even of her world.

Then her mind swung back on the old track. How had it happened that she who had stood so aloof from the sordid facts of life, been so protected, so secure—how had it happened that this hideous thing had come upon her? At times she fancied that it was a dream, that soon she would wake and find the days serene as they were before the reporter had put that first dreadful question. But this was fleeting comfort. She tried to summon to her aid a philosophic attitude—that all must suffer; that from this would come good—her nature would expand through this suffering; she would rise to undreamed heights. But what good would this rising be since her life through she must feel the effects of this scandal—see on faces of people curiosity, perhaps insolence where there had been regard and respect.

She had seen so many women of her world touched once with scandal unable ever to regain old favor. The constant reminder by the newspapers of the passed thing, the raised eyebrows of friends—the divorces that followed; and in two cases the gradual but sure disintegration of character—two women that five years ago had been welcomed guests in the most exclusive homes, dwelling now in the hopeless, gaudy notoriety of the social half-world.

Philosophy failed. She knew that she was not big enough of soul to rise superior to the snubs and sneers.

Oh, to be coarse-fibred—to be stoic, instead of so acutely sensitive, that through these few days she lived and suffered the years that were to follow.

Along with ache of mind and soul was the sympathetic ache of the body—the carefully nurtured, over-groomed body.

A co-respondent—to be sued, so the papers said, for alienation of a husband's affection. Process servers and reporters waiting for her! The driven woman shrieked aloud in the cool, musty darkness. Then fear overcame her that she might be heard, she stopped her mouth with the damp handkerchief in her hand, and waited for the sound of Martha hurrying down the stairs, but Martha, exhausted by the strain of the past three days, was in deep sleep.

"I must get away—away," she whispered.

"Where?" asked the night.

"Somewhere — somewhere, away from them all."

"Hurry — hurry," counselled the night.

Up the stairs she felt her way—a dim light burning in her room guiding her. She took a small hand-bag from the table, thrust a few things in it, searched about until she found Martha's hat and coat, turned out the light and crept down the stairs again.

Night was still over the world when the figure of a woman emerged from the servants' door and walked swiftly across the avenue into the park.

It was a relief to be out of the house,

the fresh air gave her a bit of courage—out here in a world cooled a little from its long baking by a July sun her trouble seemed less oppressive. It was a night bright with stars, and still save for the occasional far-away rumble of the cars, and the whirr of a belated automobile as it sped up the avenue. Down on the corner a policeman twirled his night-stick and gazed sleepily about. She wondered, breathless with fear, if he would arrest her, finding a lone woman prowling about at such an hour. But she gained the shadow of the park in safety and from this security looked back at the long stretch of magnificent homes—dark and deserted now. She thought of the gay and vivid life that would soon play itself out behind those windows. And there stood her own house—handsomer than most, furnished with surer, richer taste than most—expressing not only her own personality, but a worthy monument to the great name and fortune of her husband.

For fourteen years this had been her home; no modern queen had led a life more luxurious, more sheltered, more remote from sordid cares, more filled with regard and adulation. And now she was an outcast! Cut off from all of this, all because of a flagrant, cruel injustice. She missed utterly that the law that gave was the law that took away. The law—it had given her everything—it demanded nothing of her save that she keep it. Dimly she sensed this, but there was only the slightest philosophic strata in her mind for abstract speculation to root in. She only knew that she was being punished far beyond her deserts, and that life had not bred in her sufficient resistance to meet it. She could not stay and face the world and fight. There was a deep, instinctive dread of lawyers and courts—a fear acquired during a sensitive childhood when her father had fought unsuccessfully for his rights, duped by designing lawyers, denied justice by a prejudiced court. The very thought of a legal fight was terrifying, of lawyers—questions put with no regard for pride or delicacy—the spectators—for it was a case to

be fought out in the open court. Mrs. Kingdon was after every vestige of publicity that she could get; every line gave her additional value to the theatrical manager who greatly desired her services once she had reached the high-water mark of notoriety. She had once been an "actress," and she announced her intention of returning to her "chosen profession," since matrimony had proved such a failure.

While the fleeing woman paused, gazing at her home, thinking wildly where she should go, and how, the sound of approaching steps came to her and she plunged into the darkness of the park.

On and on she walked, the lights guiding her to an entrance on the west side. Once on the other side of the town she would feel almost free of her pursuers, no one would recognize her in the simple black gown and the small, sober hat. No discerning eyes could have looked on the pale, high-bred face, the large, anxious eyes, the sensitive mouth, without interest and curiosity—vaguely she knew this, and hoped to reach some place of hiding before many were stirring abroad.

She hurried on. Once or twice she was forced to rest on a park bench for, with the lack of food and sleep, she was weak and trembling. For a few delicious moments she lost consciousness in a faint doze, only to start up, staring wildly about, and then remembering.

Soon came the first signs of the early summer dawn. The stars went out one by one, the black veil lifted, the sky grew lighter until a sweet, cool greyness enveloped the world—a few early sparrows chirped overhead, and as she emerged from the park a milkman waved to her from his wagon. The passing greeting gave her a sense of human comfort.

Down the subway stairs—cool and vault-like it seemed below the ground—deserted and still. A sleepy ticket agent was aroused with difficulty, but once aroused looked at her with a sharp, curious glance that sent her hurrying past the rail to the far corner of the platform. She sat down, faint and sick—

had he recognized her? Every one in town must know her face by this time. Would he telephone for a reporter—or suppose she should meet one on the car. She would have fled from the place, but that meant to pass again the ticket-seller.

She waited, it seemed an interminable time, for the train. There were only two men in the car she entered—too drowsy from early rising to notice her. At each station other people got on and though several glanced at her there was no sign of recognition. Then two men beside her began to discuss the case.

"Some scandal in high life," one said.

"Those rich women haven't got anything else to do but get in trouble," the older man said.

"That's about it."

"This woman did seem different—above the average, went in for a lot of good things—charity and art."

"Suppose that was the attraction—a young artist in need of charity." They both laughed.

"Wonder how the old man takes it—he gets here Saturday, so the papers say."

"Oh, he'll shut it up with money, I guess, and then divorce her—they say he is a stiff-necked old fellow—so high and mighty they are glad to get something on him."

"He is older than she—" the second speaker began.

"Yes—I guess—" and here followed a coarse jest that sent the blood burning into her cheeks. Both men laughed, then the older grew serious.

"You know, it's a pretty rotten system we have. No one knows whether this woman is guilty. A jealous wife accuses her—a common enough sort this wife seems, too, with her talking all over the place—the return to the stage and all that rot, and then that firm of hold-up lawyers. What chance have the Bainbridges—they can fight it—they'll have to unless they settle for some big figure. If they win out they'll say his money did it, and three-fourths of the public will know she's guilty. Whatever happens the Kingdon woman

has got enough notoriety out of it to set her up in her 'chosen profession.' It's a beastly thing the way you can be done up by anybody with a spite against you, and the papers are responsible for a lot of wrecked lives."

"Yes—and the way they hunt you down—a fellow across the hall from me is a reporter on this case—he hasn't been home for two days and his wife—"

The train stopped and the woman at the side of the speaker grabbed her hand-bag and made a dash for the door. Through the crowd she pushed up the stairs, to stand on the street, tortured into desperation.

Across the street was a large, square, shabby building, with a hotel sign out. She crossed to it. A sleepy clerk pushed the register towards her. She wrote down a fictitious name, and after it a small Jersey town.

A yawning bellboy led her to a small room on the third floor. Two windows looked towards the west. As she closed the door she sank into a chair, trembling with exhaustion. But soon restlessness overcame her and she went to the window. Below the cars clanged by, automobiles and heavy wagons contested the right of way—the sidewalks were crowded with the early risers on their way to work. It was another hot July day that had dawned over the world. No air was stirring, and even now the sun beat down pitilessly—man and beast groaned and sweated, though the day's work had scarcely begun.

The hours wore on. She tried to sleep, but the heat and her troubled mind made it impossible. At each sound she started, each footstep in the hall seemed as if it were bringing to her door a seeker after news.

What were the papers saying about her now? Had Martha, in her fright, given out her flight—had word come from her husband—what were her lawyers doing to shut up the scandal—was Mrs. Kingdon still talking for publication, and what was poor, weak, charming, inefficient Raymond doing?

She knew that he was suffering; that he would help her if he could—knew

also, with a deep certainty, that he could do nothing and that she would have him do nothing—even if he could. It was part of the tragedy, probably the most poignant aspect of it, that between them there was no great glorious love to recompense for all the pain. On his part, weakness, dependence and the glamour of her beauty and position; on her side, a romantic, idealistic nature—too much leisure—a desire for some beauty and intensity to re-color, re-value life.

Their meeting had been strange. After a long, tiring season she had gone abroad for a rest, but once there friends seized her and it was another round of visits and entertainments until a nervous breakdown was imminent. A celebrated Viennese physician ordered a long, quiet sea voyage, away entirely from all social routine. At that time her husband was cruising in the North Sea, waiting for the naval manœuvres at Kiel and wishing not to interfere with his greatest pleasure, she booked passage from one of the southern ports on a slow boat. She traveled incognito, with only her maid for companion.

It was a very restful time—the long, sunny days on deck, with a book for company, the simple fare, the kindly captain, and courteous fellow-passengers—mostly school teachers and artists returning from a summer abroad. One young man in particular interested her. His chair was near hers on the deck and he sat for hours looking out over the sea—thinking, planning, dreaming—she often wondered which?

One day he spoke to her, and thereafter they talked together of music and books and life. He was an unsuccessful author.

"Rejected of magazines, despised of publishers," he said.

He seemed very young, almost boyish, though he confessed to thirty years. He was tall and carried himself with a careless grace; his eyes, large and unpractical in expression, appealed to her and gave an intense desire to help. The sensitiveness that showed itself in the mouth awoke a responsive chord in her

own heart—so might she have been had she been left to do battle for herself, not been wrapped in luxury and security.

The days passed. He was a delightful companion—humorous, full of ideas and ideals and enthusiasm, but with no ability to capitalize thoughts and emotions. The very necessity of earning a living paralyzed his ability to do so—she soon learned that there was a great need of an earning capacity for there was a wife in the background—a wife that made demands in return for the promising musical comedy career that she had given up for him. He spoke very little of her and then with a constraint that made the situation plainer than words could.

At first he had been sad and depressed, but in her sympathetic understanding he forgot his worries and brimmed once more with hope.

The night before they landed the first personal words were spoken between them. They stood by the deck rail looking out over the moonlit sea that hissed and surged as the boat cut her way through.

He spoke of her as a fairy princess who had appeared to him—invisible to all others—a thing too beautiful and wonderful for reality. That his life, through she, would be the inspiration toward higher things.

"You are some one high up in the world," he said, with shrewd naïvete, "you aren't just plain Mrs. Hale—you might be a queen traveling incognito, but I am glad that I do not know."

"You must do big things," she said, "fulfill yourself. We shall meet, perhaps, some time."

"I'll never reach your world," he said.

And the next day when the boat landed and the pretty, vivacious wife, with her middle-class smartness and theatrical make-up, met him her first speech was a confirmation of his suspicion.

"Say, what's Mrs. Hartley Bainbridge doing on this slow tub?"

He turned, and as he did his eyes met

those of his fairy princess, unconsciously he raised his hat in farewell, and the voice at his side exclaimed: "Well, aren't you the swell—why don't you introduce your friends?"

She saw the pantomime though she missed the words, and knew that he was aware of her identity.

During the months that passed she thought of him occasionally, wondered in a vague kindly way how he was getting on, looked over magazines hoping to see that he was succeeding—pitied him for the cheap blonde person that shared his life—then one day they met. She was crossing from a shop door to her car and he passed. They shook hands and she was grieved to see that he was thinner, paler and quite shabby. She bore him away in her car to tea and when he left her it was with the understanding that he would come again the same day next week.

These visits grew more frequent as she found that she could be of so much help to him, and at the same time provide so much interest for herself. She thought with a gentle melancholy that were she not so pampered, so enervated by luxury she too might strive to do creative work, but since it was denied her she would find her compensation in helping him. And she did help with introductions to influential editors, by opening the columns of a magazine that she had long supported with generous contributions, and in the work itself. He brought first drafts to her for criticism. They saw life through the same temperamental lenses, but the high polish that great wealth had given hers made her vision subtle and finer.

The winter passed and the spring, the bond between them growing stronger. Her husband, absorbed in his great fortune and the sports that interested him, demanded little of her time. They were together on formal occasions—they lived with an entire absence of friction and no intimacy. For years there had been only respect and a certain pleasant comradeship between them. Had she been of jealous or suspicious mind she might have known a

phase of his life that was now unknown to her.

In May he sailed for France, and she went down to the country. Here twice a week Raymond came with his work for her inspection. They sat for hours in conference, they strolled about the beautiful grounds, they drove, and after tea he returned to the city. It was idyllic and dangerous.

One evening he stayed for dinner, and afterwards they wandered down to the rose garden. It was such a night that from time's beginning had proved a wine too strong for lovers. The moon flung a silver veil over the world, the fountain sent its spray up to catch the moonbeams, the breeze stirred the tree tops and the fragrance of a thousand roses was in the air.

He cried out his love, his worship of her in rapt inspired words—what she was, what she had been, what she meant. It stirred her from her usual calm, she felt the deep primitive emotions leap the barriers of super-civilization—she gave him her hands, her brow, her lips—there was the sound of a foot crunching a fallen branch somewhere close behind them—the one sound and no more, but it robbed the night of its beauty and her heart of its ecstasy.

She sent him away, and when they met again it was with the understanding that this night was to be forgotten. She waited through the weeks that followed with a fear that she could not analyze. Some one had been listening, some one watching—then came the trip to town and the reporter's question, and she knew—knew in part—the papers told her the rest.

Mrs. Kingdon gave out numerous interviews, in fact, she denied herself to no reporters. She told of a happy married life, of a career given up for her husband, of his ingratitude and gradual estrangement owing to the influence of Mrs. Bainbridge. She had pursued him with her money and blandishments until he succumbed. It was discovered that they had crossed on a steamer together less than a year ago—Mrs. Bainbridge under an assumed name. He had ap-

peared regularly in a magazine that she financed—she had introduced him to editors—and how she his wife had suffered through it all!

Kingdon was nowhere to be found, neither was Mrs. Bainbridge, it was more than probable that they had eloped. One paper gave out that a reliable witness had seen them in the Grand Central Station. From little nearby towns came descriptions of strange couples who were immediately identified as the missing lovers.

Several conservative papers tried to stop this avalanche of scandal by the reminder that as yet all was hearsay, that it was not fair to judge, but to no avail. The case had too great news value to be dismissed.

Meanwhile the object of all this speculation and fabrication sat in the close, darkened room of a downtown hotel going over, and over the matter, seeking a way out. Her hot, dry hands pushed the hair back from her hot, dry forehead, and for the hundredth time she gazed about the sordid room that sheltered her. The brown-stained paper on the wall, the faded carpet under foot—worn in spots and dusty in the corners, the cheap, common furniture, two hideous prints on the walls and the yellowish linen on the shabby bed—her sensitive body recoiled at the sight of it.

Would she ever be able to get out of this room or should she be a prisoner here always. Was there no one in the world to whom she could turn—friends, lawyers, the stern man who was her husband—no! She longed with an ache for her father—the genial, brave-hearted gentleman who would have stood by her right or wrong—if he were alive she would not fear—but the others. There was a knock at her door—she jumped to her feet, her heart beating wildly, her breath coming in little gasps. The knocking came again and a key was tried in the door.

"Don't come in," she cried out.

"It's the maid with the towels," came the matter of fact reply.

She stumbled to the door and took

them in. This time she dropped on the bed too exhausted to think of the linen. As she lay there the call of the newsboys came up from the street—they were crying the afternoon editions, and through the jumble of sounds she caught the words, "All about the Kingdon divorce. Mrs. Bainbridge still in hiding. Extra! Extra!" She put her hands to her ears to shut out the sound.

At length she rose and went to the washstand, but the water from the faucets was warm and sickish, and she could not drink it. In desperation she went to the telephone and asked to have sent up ice water and stationery and the afternoon papers—in spite of the risk she must know what they were saying now.

She reached a hand out of the dark room to take them in, dropping into the hands of the boy a surprising tip. He hurried to the office with the news. The clerk looked up from the absorbing account of the last flight of Mrs. Bainbridge. He made a few inquiries about the occupant of room 25. Later he telephoned his friend the reporter.

Upstairs the woman drank the water thirstily, looked over the papers. There were the same headlines, the same pictures—they had even found one that she had forgotten was in existence. There was further information that her husband had not answered the wireless sent him by an evening paper anxious for a statement of his attitude. An interview with her lawyers, and everywhere the talking Mrs. Kingdon who was confident that her husband and Mrs. Bainbridge had eloped. All hideous, vulgar, sordid lies—lies against which she was powerless, lies that she could never live down. Name, position, delicacy, pride—ashes—and it was on this foundation that her life was built. Had one no protection? The protection of the courts—a long, vulgar trial, that at its best could accomplish nothing but a technical vindication. Any

woman that she knew, any high lady might be destroyed to make headlines for an afternoon edition!

She snatched up a pen and wrote, but before the page was finished she tore it up.

"Let them think what they please!" she said with a sudden fierceness.

She searched in her bag for a small box. Swallowed in rapid succession three tablets. The doctor had warned her against more than one with her weak heart.

Her spirit lightened immediately. Now they could do what they would—misunderstand, misjudge, scandalize—it was no matter now. She went to the window and raised the shade a little. A curious thing had happened—across the street all of the windows were hung with American flags—in preparation for the glorious Fourth on the morrow.

"The land of the free!" she said with an ironic twist to her lips.

Down below in the streets people were hurrying home, the cars, crowded, crawled along, automobiles wound their way in and out, the traffic policeman blew his potent whistle. Life going on and on! She turned back to the room, a gentle languor enveloping her, a new delicious quiet. The bed was no longer uninviting. She sought it gratefully.

The curtains flapped softly in the first breeze of the night, the gleam of the street lamps lighted the dark room. The quiet figure on the bed did not move. Unheeding on her ears fell the persistent ringing of the telephone bell and the cry of the newsboys under her window. "Extra! extra! All about the Kingdon divorce! Mrs. Bainbridge still in hiding! Extra! Extra!"

The next day Mrs. Kingdon, the injured wife, signed a contract with an enterprising vaudeville manager to perform her society dancing act for a term of six weeks at a salary of one thousand dollars a week.



TAHITI

By Robert Carlton Brown

HE wanted to write poetry and his wife didn't care much whether he did or not, just so he stuck around home nights, kept the furnace going, and repeated that she was the spiritual lamp-post against which he leaned when a little wobbly and full of life.

In his first poem, to his own surprise, he sang about other women. When he read it falteringly to his wife she looked curious, pained and bored, and said she never liked poetry much anyway, although she'd taken out half the gray periods with her husband in reading "The Shropshire Lad" and sad, longing lines.

For a while then he despised his poetry and dribbled out only a little in a faltering, under-handed, questioning way.

But then came Life, tripping over the heels of Poetry, pushing her aside and rushing up to seize the poet and whirl him around in an emotional fandango which kept him away from home nights.

His wife became jealous of his poetry, stopped the ears of her mind when he read it and seemed to want to stifle him.

He didn't know why, except that he wrote in a free spirit of joy, which he hadn't felt since the first years of his marriage.

Poetry fledged into romance, and for the first time he cast his eyes upon another woman, a woman who said to him, "Live, dance, be merry, for tomorrow you'll have to dye your mustache."

Strangely enough, he was stirred by the encouragement. Always a cling-

ing, feminine soul, he began to crane through the cracks in the fence for freedom.

Cutting loose, he went to dances, drank whisky, expressed himself, shedding a sooty shower of petty things, plunged beneath the surf of life, diving to the depths and swimming along the bottom with his eyes open, liking the sting of the water against them.

He realized a new freedom of being, of loving, and began to lean against a more tangible lamp-post than the spiritual one his wife had remained.

In greedy gulps he drank in gaiety with the new girl, wrote poetry about her eyes, took wild walks in the country with her, stopping for whisky at every tavern.

He didn't care which way the world threw him, just so he kept on wrestling. The periods of pause between the wrestling rounds he spent at home with his family, sobering up and giving little of himself to them. They resented this, mostly his wife, for the children were enjoying themselves self-centeredly.

The new love interest grew to a freedom of expression demanding more action. The poet wrote rousing lines like, "Give me your hand, O dearest, and we'll run round the rim of the earth," and sang sensuously of "Eyes, lips, breasts, thighs" that were soft, and one night recklessly suggested to his romantic love, "Let's beat it away from here. I'm getting tired of going home to gruel and gruelling."

The girl received the suggestion with reticence, for she, too, was married, and had been through all the urges of freedom, returning to a comfortable, com-

placent mood of mating with her husband.

"Oh, I've always wanted to go to Tahiti," she suggested at last.

"Tahiti," he repeated with glowing eyes. "What could be nicer?"

"Doesn't it sound romantic?" she cried. "Live like a cannibal, pick breadfruit from the trees and lie down under them, listening to the Paradise birds."

"And getting hit on the head once in a while by a falling Paradise nut," he put in.

"Yes. I suppose there would be little uncomfortable things like that, but it's a nuisance for us to go to work every day as we do now."

He agreed, going home to write: in the free verse in which he found most expression:

She said, "Will you come with me to Tahiti?"

*Yes, I will go,
Leaving my babies to be spoilt by another parent,
Letting my wife shift for herself.
All the way I will go
With her.*

*Because in Tahiti there are soft skies
that will be strange and new to us,
Flowers, birds and beauty of a fresh
and wondrous kind,
Curious customs, quaint houses, new
names, awaiting us.*

*I will go as lightly as I came into the
world,*

*Knowing that where happiness is
I must be.*

*Lured by romance,
Carried there by something whose
name is not known.*

Wafted by a trade wind.

Yes, I will go with you to Tahiti.

By this time, through trials and tribulations, the poet's wife had got a bit of philosophy, and when he read the poem to her she said, matter-of-factly, "Well, why don't you go?"

"Oh, maybe I will," he answered.

When he read it to his passion flower she smiled appreciatively and said, "Isn't that nice!"

So Tahiti became the point of destination. Whenever he tired of his job, his wife or responsibilities, he told himself the sun was always shining in Tahiti. Once he got down the geography and located the fly speck on the map. He read the short description of the enchanted isle, and he and the girl lingered over every detail.

"We'll go to Tahiti," they sang together, and their eyes brightened. Distressing details of life disappeared in the charming promise of Tahiti.

One night in a crowded café of artificial brilliance an acquaintance sipped chartreuse with the romantic pair and told them of his travels in the far island.

Here was a man who actually had been there. The poet's eyes grew moist with emotion, he lingered over every alluring word and idealized the traveler.

In the subway, at his desk, in prosaic places with the girl the poet thought of Tahiti and his heart quickened its beat and his eyes grew bright. Everyone told him how well he looked and in a burst of sympathy, affection for the world, he wanted to tell everybody what a vastly more gorgeous, gleaming creature he would be in Tahiti with his true love.

Nights when he would have preferred being at home he sought out the girl who was to be his mate in the great romantic adventure and they sat up till four o'clock in the morning, talking of the wondrous beautiful unfolding of life in Tahiti.

The poet danced by day and flew in his dreams. He felt the sun must be a little jealous of his radiance. Instead of worrying about his trifling job he wrote poetry and dreamed Tahiti.

Then one day his boss called him into the office and fired him for not paying attention to material duties. The poet laughed at the ignorant, earth-bound person and skipped lightly

out of the office, already half the way to the unbelievable isle.

He was going to call up the girl and tell her about it, but first he thought he'd better go home and explain to his wife that the grocery bill could not be met that week. Then he would slip away and send money back from Tahiti, if he could get a job in some cannibal butcher shop.

In his excitement he forgot to take his usual number of drinks, and when he got home he felt the need of sleep. On awakening he told his wife about the loss of the job. She said, "That's good, now you can give all your time to writing poetry."

He looked up at the good roof over his head a little wistfully and ate the good dinner his wife had provided. It was cold outside, but somehow he didn't think so much of the warmth of Tahiti. It was pretty snug in the house, after all. He'd have to go outdoors to get to Tahiti, and here was comfort right at hand.

Day after day he put off the trip. There was an imperceptible slackening of his interest in seeing the girl, who had always seemed at least half of the island. He rather enjoyed staying around home like a good housebroken husband, taking the twins out on the leash for a walk every afternoon and slipping back into conventional life.

It wasn't long before he realized he had never been a poet at all, that some bug of restlessness had bitten him and his howls of discomfort had taken the form of metrical verse. He laughed lightly when his now smiling wife spoke in gently chiding tones of his

inamorata. He had almost forgotten her, and she him.

Before long his good behavior was rewarded with a better job, longer hours, more responsibility, respectability. He went to it eagerly, becoming again a model husband.

One day as he was hurrying out to a frugal lunch he met the girl with whom he had dined at gay places; she was slipping into Childs.

"Oh, Carrie," he cried, mildly pleased to recall their former intimacy, "how are you?"

She turned, looked at him blankly for a moment, and then, remembering his face, smiled sweetly and shook his hand warmly.

"How are you, Ned? Where have you been keeping yourself?"

"Oh," he smiled whimsically, "I've just got back from Tahiti."

"So have I," she exclaimed. "Didn't we have a nice time?"

"Yes. I'll never forget those 'flowers, birds and beauty of a fresh and wondrous kind.'"

"And the 'curious customs, quaint houses and new names' we found when we got there, weren't they worth while!" she enthused.

"Yes, and that traveler who met us at the pier when we landed, eyes all agog for adventure, our first glimpse of Tahiti, you remember. Wasn't it fine of him to wait over a boat just to meet us?"

"Yes. Simply splendid. But it does seem good to be back, doesn't it." She extended her hand in parting.

"Yes, kind of," he admitted with lingering reluctance, going down the street to eat bitter breadfruit alone in his hashery.



THE one thing a man is absolutely sure to gain by marriage is experience.



FREEDOM

By Michael Meeredy

"HE will never give me another care," said the woman. She smiled as she bent over her dead, and touched his forehead with her fingers. Then she stood motionless in the gray light and looked at him, while the heart sang in her bosom.

"... If life stole you from me, death has given you back. Across the world you wandered like a straw blown by the wind . . . and the path you travelled led ever from my side. You turned your face from mine; you eluded my outstretched arms. You have listened to other voices and looked in other eyes. You have despised my love for other loves. You have trampled on my de-

sires, mocked at my hopes. You would have slain my soul and broken my heart if your strength had been equal to your will.

"Yet now . . . across the world you have drifted back to me.

"Nights of tears and days of longing are gone by like a dream. I am alive again. I can fling back my head and let the cool air play on my face and my breast. I can laugh with the little winds.

"Sleep on, you wanderer, sleep on! In death you are mine and mine alone! Mine, Mine, Mine!"

Then she smiled at the song of her heart and drew the sheet over his white face and went out into the sunlight.



SONG

By Anne McCormick

I KNOW a garden green and deep
Where larks make song,
And in a blue-gray pool at dawn
The late stars throng.

All day the little sunbeams sleep
In beds of flowers,
While shadows watch across the lawn
And hush the hours.

When dark steals down my garden grows
So wide, so high,
The young pines touch the swinging moon
And feel the sky.

And I, a dusty soul that knows
No heights by day,
At night climb up to fields bestrewn
With stars to play.

THE PITCHER WHICH WENT TO THE WELL

By H. S. Haskins

TO be physically fit was the prime object in Tompkins' life. From his sixteenth year he had leaned over, with unbent knees, touching the floor a prescribed large number of times, morning and night. Was it surprising that at forty he had the tapering waist and muscular build of a man half his age?

What physical culture had meant to him, for so many years, at length took concentrated form in one pet hobby—his ability to walk with extraordinary swiftness. In short, Tompkins made a fetish of his leg muscles. It must be conceded that his assurance in this particular had a substantial foundation. Throughout the length and breadth of the country, where could be found another pair of legs comparable to his?

Immeasurably strong and shapely, capable of prodigious strides, such legs were these as childish fancy invests with seven league boots. And thus, in an increasing degree, during the twenty years following college, Tompkins surrounded these legs with an awful pride, built upon them a single monumental arrogance.

For two decades he had not been involuntarily passed on the street. His was an effective trick of pressing on the balls of his feet when hostile footsteps threatened to overtake him. Sometimes slowly, but always surely, he drew away from his conscious or unconscious competitor. On rare occasions it occurred to him that Age might, at any time, slow his pace, but such fears were brusquely pushed back into his sub-consciousness.

One bright morning Tompkins started on his three-mile walk to the train. In the suburbs, where he lived, he had the choice of two railroad stations. He selected the further one.

Half of the journey to the station was empty of incident. The halfway point was marked by an intersecting street, a new street lately built up. As he passed the point of intersection he was vaguely aware of the opening and closing of the door of one of the new houses and the light staccato of feet descending the front steps. Then the fact was apparent to Tompkins' challenged ears that the footsteps were overtaking him.

With a confident smile, like a chauffeur coaxing his car, he despatched an increase of energy to his feet. Immediately they responded and the trained body leaned forward with accelerated speed.

The pursuing footsteps offered battle. Unbelievable fact—they were still gaining on him! For a stinging moment the shock of terror shook Tompkins. Calling on his reserve for a greater effort he resorted to his trusty trick of pressing upon the balls of his feet.

Under the new impulse he shot ahead, nearly at maximum speed.

With consternation Tompkins felt the perspiration collecting in little puddles above his temples, impounded there by the sweat-band of his hat. But his heart, backed by generations of sobriety, kept stanchly at work, pumping energy to the straining leg muscles, shooting vigor to the pressing toes,

telegraphing courage to the harassed brain.

For a block the new outburst of force held his opponent. Then, almost imperceptibly, the distance between the two men lessened and with the station still a quarter of a mile away, Tompkins realized that he must call upon his last pound to win.

There was a hum in his ears. The escaping sweat trickled down his grim face. His breath whistled through his teeth as with splendid determination he threw in his third and last speed.

For a glorious instant he drew ahead, but only for an instant.

Inexorably the pursuing footsteps thudded closer and closer; now five yards behind; now three yards; now six feet!

Five feet! A foot! Three inches! An inch—now on even terms!

Then gradually, persistently, victoriously, the stranger forged ahead and Tompkins was beaten. The Past was in ruins. The twenty years' supremacy had crumbled. The pitcher had gone to the well once too often.

Tompkins is fat and prosperous, now. His waist is ten inches larger than his chest. He eats more of everything than he needs but his New England ancestors digest it for him. He is all things physically which he fought for twenty-five years not to be. But he is earning money in sinful amounts.

He dates his business success to that bright morning when Jones, now his head bookkeeper, dethroned those immeasurably strong and shapely legs.



IN THE MIDST OF MY EMBRACE

By Albert Lewin

IN the midst of my embrace my love said, "Let us search for happiness." We found a cloud-island floating on a blue sky-sea. There we sat unclad watching the lake that rippled and far away the round mountains dark with many trees. All about us was pure sunlight. My love said, "I cannot scent here the sweet wild flowers that grow in fragrant fields." So we left our zephyr-wafted vessel for a covert deep in a mountain valley. The meadow was golden and green and blue with many flowers. Perfumes were heavy in the air. We moved hand in hand over the velvet grass carpet. My love said, "I cannot see here the dark hills and the lake that shimmers with silver ripples." In the midst of my embrace my love sighed, "Is there no happiness in the world?"



INTELLIGENCE lasts a woman much longer than beauty. But it is a good deal less useful while it lasts.



THE PURE IN HEART

A YOUNG GIRL'S DOCUMENT

By Mary Heaton Vorse

ONCE told this story to a friend of mine, putting it to him as a hypothetical case.

"No, girl," my friend said, "could feel that way or take such a slight affair so seriously. It is not a possible situation."

Now this man had specialized in the human emotions. I know hardly another man—no, nor woman, either—who has a deeper insight into people's hearts, or greater sympathy for what he finds there. But he was also a man of deep sophistication; more than that, he was past forty. He had forgotten how any human being in his senses could have felt Olivia's desperation for what seemed to him so slight a cause.

The shortness of our emotional memory is that which makes the gulf between youth and age so hopeless. Most of us forget how we felt when we were young, or we have for the sufferings of our youth only an indulgent smile, and this indulgent smile, this taking of the early wounds of the spirit so lightly has killed more confidence between youth and maturity than any other thing. We not only forget how we felt but we forget too how cruelly at variance with life are the things which we teach young girls. We forget by what dolorous lessons we adjusted ourselves to reality, or in what way those of us who have never been able to face reality evaded the lessons which life would have taught us.

That is why Olivia's case seemed absurd to my friend—so absurd that he went so far as to say what no one should ever say about any combination of circumstances which involve the hu-

man heart, that is, that it was an impossibility.

Again, I told the story to a nice woman with daughters of her own and to her it was an alienating tale. Poor soul, she so desired to have girls think and act and feel in the way we have been taught to believe a young girl should—a way they probably never do. I know by her reaction against Olivia she was digging a grave between any understanding which might have existed between herself and her own girls. A young girl, she thought, should feel no passion—until the right and proper time, the marriage service being safely over.

"A really nice girl," I remember her saying, "would have instinctively recoiled in time. You must admit that she lacked balance and that it was all extraordinarily unfortunate and simply dreadful for her poor father and mother. Then, too, there's something awful about people feeling all right when they have been all wrong."

But is not youth that deserves the name of youth always unbalanced, and should we not try to find out a little more about it instead of attempting to fit it into our ideal of what it should be? It is as a small contribution to a better understanding of the tempestuous emotions of girlhood so carefully guarded from human observation, so deeply buried in a girl's heart that I tell this story of Olivia.

I had known Olivia well, for we lived next door to her and there was only a fringe of shrubs between our two places. I had seen her perform the miracle so

aging to those who see it, of turning over night from a little girl to a woman. I at the time was a young married woman, engaged with my household and my babies, and Olivia, long-legged, with flashing smile and a flaming way with her like a torch upheld in a gallant hand, had flashed in and out of my house.

I remember well enough the shock it gave me when one day she was bending over some great red lilies and raised her head to look at me and I saw that instead of a woman and little girl we were both of us grown women together.

She heard footsteps of someone walking, and turned her head with the swift movement of a bird, listening, and her gesture was so unconscious and so brimming and overflowing with what she felt and what she hoped that I remember warm tears sprang to my eyes and had I done what my instinct was I must have put my arms about her and said, "Oh, my dear, has it come to you so quickly?"

Walking along through the trees I saw Paul Aershot. He was the son of an old friend of her father, I understood, and had come for a few weeks of quiet to finish writing a book and was visiting Mr. Ferris, Olivia's father. He was a professor of English in some small college, and combined a professorial sleekness—he looked more like a prosperous young preacher than a professor, for that matter—with merry dark eyes. He had intelligence and thought well of himself.

At the sight of Olivia his face lighted; he smiled at her with his eyes and then his gaze rested on her tranquilly and speculatively. I often saw him looking at her like this, as though he were trying to make her out, as if he were carefully and painstakingly balancing her in his mind, weighing her and always finding her a little wanting.

At that moment of her early development Olivia had kept from childhood a certain elfin quality. She had a lightness of mood, a whimsical gaiety, an impetuosity, alluring to the senses and yet, not reassuring qualities for a young pro-

fessor to contemplate in a wife. She seemed like a half-tamed, scarlet-winged bird.

Afterwards I saw them often in the garden together, Olivia displaying before him, for her own undoing, her innocent coqueties. Indeed, I think she wove these magical bewitchments about him to such an extent that Aershot perhaps never saw the spirit of her at all. The sparkle of her may have dazzled him so that he never looked into the still and quiet places of her heart.

During that time Mrs. Ferris beamed upon them like a beneficent and pretty pincushion—for more than anything else a blond pincushion was what she inevitably reminded one of. She was full of kindness and futility and very likely believed in the world of which she told Olivia.

It was her appearance, I think, that aggravated the poignancy of the inarticulate, desperate hours that she passed with me later. At that time I knew nothing about what had happened. I only knew that Aershot had gone and that a shadow had fallen over Olivia. It was not then but later, that her mother passed miserable days of hopeless misery. For comfort she sat hours with me, during which she told me nothing, while we talked, as women do, of indifferent things, never for a moment touching in words what was in our minds—hours when tragedy, a visible presence, sat with us suffocating me, destroying her. She was not the sort of woman to be destroyed; it was hideous to see her have to meet tragedy. I remember I used to long to cry aloud, and still this blond, plump, still pretty but suffering creature kept despair at bay by simply passing time with me. I knew she wanted to talk to me but that what she wanted to tell me was too horrible for her tongue to name.

As to Olivia, at that time she gave one the effect of fire and ice. I sometimes would see her walking at evening, a lovely thing, glowing with her own inner radiance, and yet when I saw her with her mother, she was as if frozen. There was defiance in her manner, but

also something far deeper and far nobler. One would have said that her mother had outraged something deeply fine in her. It was painful to see the two keeping up appearances together.

Of all my memories of that time the one that stands out most poignantly is an afternoon Olivia spent with me. I think I have never felt the beauty of a human soul more closely than I felt the beauty of hers that day. I wondered what had so changed her, for there had been weeks when before my eyes I had seen Olivia's radiance fade. I had felt she was slinking around like a creature ashamed. But at this time her mother had seemed tranquil and complacent enough: now Olivia was triumphant and her mother stricken.

There was something so poignant about Olivia that day; she seemed so happy that I wanted to take her in my arms and kiss her and bless her for this gladness that had evidently come over her. Now and then she would look at me with long, questioning glances as though she wished to tell me something and yet profoundly wished not to. Her silence was as consoling and made me feel all was right with her as her mother's was profoundly disquieting.

Then Mrs. Ferris passed the house, and at sight of her mother Olivia drew herself up in a young rigidity, like a proud and scornful lily. The eyes she turned on her mother were like accusing stars; her sweet mouth was drawn into an inflexible and judging line. The change was so abrupt and it startled me so that I was surprised into saying:

"Olivia, no girl should judge her mother that way"—remember, I knew her well—"no matter what her mother may have done."

Olivia turned wounded eyes on me, lovely eyes, eyes in which there was both truth and the higher pride of a spirit which believes in itself. But the words she said were:

"I can never forgive her."

She spoke without passion, with a deep sadness rather, as though stating some facts over which she wept, and she said further:

"I thought she was my mother," and then, with a touch of passion, "To be a mother, you know, means more than to bring people's bodies into the world. Are all mothers just like that?" she went on with an intensity that had in it no touch of hysteria, but only a deep and guarded feeling. "Do all mothers make light of the thing they should weep over and cry when they should be glad?"

"Olivia," I told her, "I can't judge between your mother and yourself. All I know is that youth is often hard in its judgment of age, and when it gets older there is nothing that a human being regrets more deeply than its youthful hardness. I know that your mother is suffering deeply, more perhaps than she has ever suffered."

At that Olivia drew herself up and looked at me clear-eyed.

"There was a moment," she said, "when she might have suffered for me with justice; now she has no cause for suffering and it will very soon all be over for her." She laughed, and there was just a touch of bitterness in her laugh.

She sat there looking out of the window, and I thought I had never seen a human being who looked more glowing or purer or more touching. As I looked at her then and saw her whole attitude—unshaken towards herself was what she was—I again so longed to take her in my arms and kiss her, that I did. The touch of my sympathy and kiss melted her little shallow hardness and she wept.

"*She* should have done that," she cried, "*she* should have done that! *You* don't know anything, but you *see*—and if I told you everything, still you would *see*! *You're* acting like a mother."

"Olivia, dear," I said, with my arms still around her, "can't you believe, however difficult it may be to bear whatever has come between you, that she did the best she knew?"

Olivia had no more tears.

"Yes, I believe that, and it's a very terrible thing for me to believe," she answered, "if it was the best she knew, she was no true mother."

I had to leave it at that.

So you can understand it was as though I lived in a riddle. I felt as if I were walking around in some distorted and tragic spiritual wonderland; there was always some white rabbit of an explanation scuttling down a hole. Even when the climax came and Olivia ran away, my questions all remained unanswered. Curiously enough, Mrs. Ferris seemed happier after that, though still unaccountably tormented, still unspeakably distressed.

* * *

I realize that this is a long and tantalizing preamble, but that was the way the story came to me. It was not until years after that I got the answer to my riddle—long, long after the time when all the wounds that they had given and taken had been healed between Olivia and her mother. I knew nothing more until, in a poignant moment of my own life when I was groping to understand the hearts of my own girls, Olivia told me all that had happened between Aershot and Gordon and herself.

You must remember that Olivia was very young and that she had not been awakened to life by boy and girl flirtations; her mother disapproved of things of that sort and had shielded her from them, and she had a native purity beside. She was not the kind of girl who, with an innocent rakishness, half offers herself to be kissed and half withdraws. At the time that she met Aershot I suppose she and her mother had never discussed in open terms questions of conduct.

So when Aershot met Olivia she was a luminous and blank page and he wrote upon her with letters of fire.

"From the first," she began, "there was between us that profound and mysterious interest that brings a man and a woman so inevitably together. I felt in his presence an overwhelming gladness that was new to me; it made my breath come short. I was so keenly conscious of him when he came into a room where I was that my cheeks turned red. He was the first older man to whom I had been able to talk naturally and without

feeling embarrassed. It seemed to me I could play with him as if he were another girl. I was so happy, it made me want to romp!"

I saw her doing just this—she romped and coquetted at the same time. She was a little laughing and beckoning flame.

"We had been good friends for some weeks. He had called me his 'little comrade,' and all the other pet names that an older man gives to a much younger girl who interests him. We had given one another our hands as we had run down a hill together; he had held my arm closely as we walked home from some evening place, my father and mother walking on ahead, and his nearness had been suffocatingly sweet to me, a wonderful emotion which I called by no name at all. I was so star-happy at that time I never considered whether I was in love with him or he with me. I was *living*—and he spent all the time he could with me.

"One night Paul and I were alone on the piazza together. It was the sort of starlit, sweet-smelling night that talks of love even to the prosaic. We were standing there together looking off into the darkness, and we didn't speak. A sweet and terrible silence enfolded us. Still we didn't speak. I felt I must run away—from what danger I didn't know—and yet for nothing in the world would I have stirred. I felt I must find refuge in the triviality of talk, and yet for nothing in the world would I have broken the magic of that oppressive, heady silence.

"Then from one moment to another I knew why my heart was beating as if it must break. I knew that I had unconsciously waited for what happened, for his arms were around me and he kissed me, kissed me—my face, my eyes, my mouth, and then kissed me again as though he were drinking my soul. I didn't kiss him. I was too broken and too overwhelmed with all that was passing within me to do more than stay in his arms relaxed, with the passivity of total acquiescence.

"Then after a time, very gravely, very

sweetly, he pushed me gently from him. He was too profoundly shaken with the emotion of the moment.

"You must go up now, Olivia," he told me. It seemed as though there was almost a note of entreaty in his voice. Then he said: "Dear Olivia!" and held out his arms, and I, as if in a dream, moved toward them and let them enfold me, and he kissed me again. And then I went without speaking once.

"He had kissed me until my heart lay in his hand. He had kissed me until he had drunk my very soul from my lips. It seemed to me that I was physically deeply weary. It seemed to me that I couldn't even reach my room, and yet this very weariness was the sweetest thing I had ever felt in life. Body and soul I belonged to him then. I didn't reason about things—I just *felt*."

"Then, and in the days which followed, I felt as if some astonishing change had passed over me: I had tasted of the delight of love and rejoiced in a man's caress. Without putting it into words what I felt most keenly and indeed what I most rejoiced in, was that I was not a, well, not as I had been—though I had done no more than give my lips to be kissed.

"I don't want to make Paul Aershot out an especial cad. What was wrong with him was that he lacked imagination and a total knowledge of the hearts of young girls, and in that he is not at all peculiar. He may have read in my quick acquiescence and in my lack of any remorse afterwards, a certain experience. Very likely had I wept and reproached myself for unmaidenliness he might even have loved me. Many a woman has undone herself with a possible lover by not acting the way books have taught us to believe a woman in certain situations should act. Undoubtedly had I fled from him he would have pursued. I didn't know then that there are some men one must play as if they were fishes. I didn't pursue him: I was *there*, and he took of me what he liked—what he liked was very discreet, nothing more than kisses. Once or twice when the blood mounted too hotly to his

head, 'We shouldn't do this, Olivia,' he said to me, and to this I answered nothing at all.

"But he never once told me he loved me. There are men who think a woman should not think a man loves her until they have given the pledged and spoken word. It is one of the ways we have for blinding ourselves to our minor irregularities. No doubt he must often have been tempted to tell me he loved me, but he bravely resisted this temptation.

"The fact of it was he didn't love me, and I knew he didn't. I think he may have wanted to, but there was a gap of years. He wasn't quite old enough to be maddened by immaturity.

"He liked to play with me, the way one does with a grown-up child. What went on in his mind, I never found out. All I knew was that he went away, expecting to be gone a week or ten days on a visit. He may have been very seriously thinking all this time whether he did love me or not, but once he got away he found he didn't love me—he had only desired me. Very likely at a distance the idea of me as a wife may have seemed fantastic to him. He never told me. He never came back.

"I was left behind, every bit of me his, every wish of my heart flowing towards him. When for a week he didn't write to me, I lived in a state of supreme goodness, giving to him the understanding that few older women give to a negligent lover. When at last a letter came from him it was a short, pleasant, brotherly note. He told me he was missing me, that he was having a good time, that I was his dear little comrade, but that he was not coming back because he had begun to work where he was and thought he had better stay there, and would his dear little companion write to her friend often?"

"I read this over and over; I couldn't believe it. Then I wrote him a little, guarded note which begged him to come back. Again for a little while I was perfectly good, innerly sweet, totally trustful. I *would not* believe what had happened. After all, what had hap-

pened was a perfectly commonplace thing: it happens every day. It's the kind of thing that leaves no scar of remorse on men's hearts. If anyone had discussed the situation with Paul he would probably have said he had been good for my development.

"He certainly, if you like, developed me. Some time passed before he wrote again and I waited in perfect faith and trust, longing for him, but yet too happy at the thought of him to think anything but good, and 'good' of course meant to me that he wouldn't have made love to me had he not loved me. No one had ever explained any of these things to me.

"At last he wrote again, and there was a little note of flippancy in his letter that had reference to our friendship; it was like a knife in my heart. It was then that the flaming things that he had written in my spirit and made my body feel, turned black and scorched my very soul. I felt outraged, played with.

"I felt all that a woman might feel who had given herself completely.

"Yes, to the very limit of what a person may feel, I felt that I had been outraged and deserted. I felt just that thing—as if I had given myself to be a plaything of passion. And so indeed I had, and I felt all the recklessness and horror that a young girl abandoned by a trusted lover might feel. I felt unspeakably degraded and all the pureness of my heart was withered and scorched. I was like a young tree over which a forest fire had passed.

"You see, to my straight, untaught, childish mind, purity and maidenliness were not relative. To me, virginity was a spiritual thing and an absolute thing. The awful part of it was that I had given passion also—more than that, I had given love where no one had wanted it—and all that had been required of me was a little passion. I realized all these things, and as I realized them I began to creep around the world trying to hide from myself, for I felt I was vile or else a man could not have so played with me. I had been taught—

as we are all taught, are we not?—that passion in itself is a very shameful thing? It is true I had been in good faith and had given love also—love that was now a withered and blasted thing turned to hate within me as it so often is in the heart of the betrayed. But the thought that tortured me was:

"If I had been a good girl, really good, he wouldn't have felt that way towards me without loving me.

"Meantime his letters when they came were a greater torture. He evidently believed he had not touched my heart any more than I had touched his, and he looked upon our relation as the lightest and most delightful of summer episodes. I answered his letters, not too soon, in a similar vein, meanwhile diving deeper and deeper into the hell in which live those betrayed women who were really innocent when they were betrayed.

"I, of course, had been taught to think that passion was not an emotion which nice girls feel, and I looked in my heart and thought its fires were the fires of hell and put my hands to my eyes to hide those fires. I lived through shameful days when for just the caress that I knew was worthless I wanted him back—at least so I thought in my loneliness and bitterness.

"As the weeks went on and I began to hate him, as the thought of his kiss still remained with me in my dreams and as my mother saw the change in me, she began to be worried. She wondered what had come between Paul and me and asked transparently sly questions, at first fatuously believing I had given this good match the 'mitten.'

"One night late she stole into my room and found me shaken with sobs. Alarm and suspicion shook her.

"What's the matter, Olivia?"

"I couldn't answer.

"Olivia, tell me what is the matter?" Her voice was very grave. "Olive, my own child, tell me—you must tell me! It's something about Paul Aershot?"

"I was silent, sobbing my shame and

despair. My mother put a compelling hand upon me.

"I want to know what's happened," she said slowly, "I *must* know."

"So, little by little, shaken with sobs, I told her; and as I told her a sigh of immense relief escaped my mother's lips. Even then, overcome with my own emotion, I registered the relief of this sigh with surprise. At first she was angry; angry at Paul and also at me: I hadn't behaved as she had hoped her daughter would. Then after a time:

"That young man profited by your innocence!"

"But you don't understand," said I. I felt I must put my own blackness before someone, that sharing it would ease my burden, for I had gotten to that state of mind where women fling spiritual modesty from them and in the divorce court cry out to the world at large, 'Yes—yes, I am guilty! Yes, I loved this man!' He *kissed* me."

"Why, Olivia, my dear," cried my mother, 'of course he didn't act right, but men are men. We have to face that fact and be on our guard. And a kiss—'

"You don't understand," I repeated, steadying my voice, 'I would have done whatever he asked me.'

"You don't know what you're talking about," my mother said kindly, but I knew only too well. 'Don't exaggerate things, Olivia,' my mother told me.

"Then indeed it seemed to me that the universe was melting under my feet. It didn't seem possible to me that my mother could have understood.

"He didn't *love* me,' I said very low, 'and I—I couldn't have loved him or I wouldn't feel sick and half frozen when I think of him.'

"Why, of course, darling, you didn't love him," said my mother consolingly, 'but there are no bones broken. Least said soonest mended. Some better fellow will soon come along and put Paul right out of your head. I'll never let your father—' she spoke these words with anger and determination—"invite that young man to the house again. I would have thought—' She broke off,

closing her mouth tightly, but even I could have supplied that my mother's criticism was 'an older man would have acted better.'

"My mother was disturbed and disgusted, but that was all. She was not appalled; she did not seem to think anything had happened of very great consequence. She even told me 'to be sensible.' This lit a flame of recklessness in me, especially her words about 'some other man.' My own mother suggested that one pass from hand to hand, that the surrendering of one's essential virginity of spirit and heart and body meant nothing.

"I dried my tears. I was 'sensible.'

"You really think then," I said, 'you really think some one else would make me forget all about it?'

"Why, of course, my dear, I'm perfectly sure of it," my mother responded, 'Stuart Gordon has taken a great liking to you, and he seems a nice, clean young fellow.'

"Then it was," Olivia told me, "that I became a bad woman."

I suppose most men who read this will not understand Olivia's point of view, for this is, after all, a woman's story. It is only women who will realize how shameful a thing it could seem to a girl brought up as Olivia was, to have acted as she did. It is only women who will understand how carefully they guarded themselves from the knowledge of what they did feel. On the other hand, it is hard for a man to remember when some flicker of desire did not quiver through his mind—sometimes a thing to be ashamed of, but more often simply to be recognized as a thing inherent in his nature.

So, with scorn of herself, Olivia set about stamping Aershot's image from her mind.

"It was with the recklessness of despair that I first let Stuart make love to me," she told me.

"I threw myself into it as a dog maddened with pain tears at its wounds as if to tear the pain out. From the first I liked Stuart Gordon. He was young, a boy in quality. The companionship

between us grew. We took long walks together and watched the sun go down from the top of a mountain and hurried home to supper. The fires of shame still smouldered deeply in my heart, so deeply that at that time I had no clear vision at all as to what I was beginning to feel for Gordon. My experience with Aershot still poisoned me. It came to me with an awful and horrible shock, as a corroboration of the fact that I had been done for and exploited, when I found a pleasure in the touch of Gordon's hand. In my groping ignorance, in my little trifling knowledge of myself and of life, I thought I had given all I could give, and behold! the words of love and affection and the touch of another hand were comforting.

"I imagined," she told me, "that what I felt for Gordon at first was what Aershot had felt for me—passion without love, and I thought Gordon had only the same feeling for me. 'Men were men,' my mother had told me.

"I didn't realize that he loved me until he told me he wanted to marry me, and I looked into his heart and saw that he had for me all the sincerity and sweetness that I had once had unasked and unwanted. And yet I was too full of shame to feel love for him and I told him so. He couldn't understand it. He thought I must love him; I had given all the evidences of loving him, it seemed to him. Men are very naïve about this. If they are in love they cannot understand a woman permitting herself to be kissed unless she is in love, too, and if they are not in love, they cannot understand her taking a caress seriously.

"But he was really in love and he refused to believe me. He told me he intended to win me anyway. I feel I should have sent him away, but I didn't have the courage—he was too dear to me."

"But didn't you feel shame then of what you were doing?" I asked her.

"No," she said, "you see, I had the recklessness of a girl who thinks she is past saving. Since I had been so played with, since I was no longer good

in my own eyes, I didn't care any more. You know, girls feel that way.

"So he set about making me love him with unbelievable tenderness, with unbelievable understanding. I told him all about Paul and he understood what my mother had not. He understood and he tried to make me understand, but shame had burned into me too deeply. I could forget Paul for a while but deep down in my spirit there nagged at me a feeling of degradation. I told Stuart, too, how I had begun to let him make love to me and that, too, by a miracle he understood. Little by little, with unflagging sweetness and devotion he won my heart from the dark places where it had been. I came out toward him, I remember, shyly and hesitatingly. I think all I have now against Paul is that he robbed me of the confidence of love. Could I only have loved Stuart first I could have gone to him so radiantly. But I was never sure of myself, I was still ashamed, still walking around in that world of half knowledge in which we imprison the hearts of young girls. Even after I had said I would marry him I felt that way. I still exaggerated what I had given Paul. I still felt that what I was giving to Stuart was something second hand and tarnished, though I knew I was giving to him more profoundly from the depths of me than I had done before.

"But gradually the wound began to be healed. I felt as if the scarred and blackened places in my soul were beginning to blossom again and I let myself be glad again, though deep in me lingered that needless shame, the feeling that I had given all a woman could give to one who did not desire it."

* * *

This brings me to that part of my story which is the most difficult to "get across." Nature, of course, aided and abetted what happened, but what aided and abetted it much more was Olivia's fundamental contempt for herself. She felt so ignominious in her own eyes that before she became Gordon's really she felt there was not the hair's breadth of a difference between what she had done

and anything further she might do.

"I had lost the spiritual quality of maidenliness," she explained to me, "and that was all that mattered to me. Then, too, I had heard the term 'demi-vierge' and it seemed to me that was what I was."

It is with such half teachings that we fuddle the minds of our girls; it is in this way we make shameful to them the first thrillings of their pulses, natural and inevitable as the fluttering of wings of birds in a nest, until they see no difference between this and the great game that means life and death.

There was no plan on either side, of course. What happened between them was done as sweetly on his part and as unpremeditatedly as if they had been a wedded pair. Life and love upwelled in his heart and bore him along beyond the confines of caution. They bore her along, too, but with a certain sternness on her part, with a curious desire to play fair with this thing that loved her. That, and the deeply-rooted belief that having been brushed by the wings of passion she knew all of passion, and that, knowing it without having been loved in the first instance and without giving love, she was a lost creature.

"Then what happened," Olivia told me, "was a miracle. All the hardness of my spirit melted, all my scorn of myself vanished: I looked into Stuart's eyes and knew I loved him. I knew that all I had felt before was but child's play, though I didn't put it into words then in my great and flooding emotion. I knew I had been the victim of my own childish imaginings. As we looked at each other I knew that we irrevocably belonged to each other, and instead of shame and disillusion I felt my soul had been purged. I knew that I had not been bad. All the past was blotted out for me. I felt all the security of true wedlock, the trust in my own man and a measureless tenderness toward him. All the floodgates of my soul were unloosed and unlocked."

"For the first time in months I cried, and Stuart thought I was crying for what had happened, and, torn with pity

for me and remorse at himself, he took me in his arms and comforted me, and told me how truly he loved me and how in sight of God he was my husband, and all the other sweet things that a boy might tell a girl in such a moment. I didn't try to explain; I only drank the sweetness of the moment. It was as if he had put the crown of womanhood upon my head again. I had been a little child, afraid of all sorts of things that didn't exist, and now, for the first time, I knew myself. For the first time I could think of Paul without a quiver of bitterness and pain. I saw what he had done more as he must have seen it. I knew it was not so much Paul as the measureless difference between the way boys and girls are brought up. Older men cannot believe our unbelievable innocence and the effect on us of our first knowledge of the tree of good and evil."

Here was a strange paradox, you say. While Olivia had been good she had felt lost and degraded. Now she was no longer good she felt absolved, for the first time right with the world since her heart had been wounded. It is hard to explain this but now her heart was wholly Stuart's, and his hers. They sat together and talked solemnly of their life to come and their love for one another and they planned to be married very soon, in a month or two.

All would have gone well no doubt and there would have been a marriage with all congratulations from the world had not a too-revealing letter gone astray and fallen into the hands of Olivia's father.

He asked questions: Olivia told the truth, and spiritually they "threw her out," for they treated both of these young things as sinners. It was inconceivable to them that their little girl should be what she was. There was no possible way in which she could make them understand that she had already felt herself soiled and that she felt that between what she had done and anything else she might do there lay no difference at all, that now she felt exactly as if Stuart and she had slipped off and had the marriage ceremony said over

their heads, since it had been said in their hearts.

In his first burst of outraged fatherhood there was nothing Mr. Ferris could not find to say against Stuart Gordon—immoral, betrayer of trust, leader astray of innocent girls.

Mrs. Ferris characteristically sobbed: "Now—*now* how can we have a real wedding after what has happened? I should feel like a whited sepulchre."

By a "real wedding" Olivia supposed she meant a white dress and veil, congratulatory guests and all the rest of it.

It was then she proudly withdrew herself from her mother. All her delicacy was outraged by their attitude, by her mother's pressing eagerness to know there *was* to be a wedding, by her evident fear that Stuart Gordon would now leave the girl who was in heart and soul and body already his bride.

"Men *will* act so," she insisted, and every word the older people spoke wounded Olivia more and more fundamentally. Her parents had taken the beauty of her love and tried to pull it to pieces before her eyes. They could not do that but they could pull apart her belief and trust in them and they did it relentlessly, as I suppose many an anguished father and mother have done before them.

It was during those days that Mrs. Ferris came and sat in my house to escape her grief and shame, and it was during those same days that Stuart and Olivia made their plans. He had a small position, just enough to marry on, and they had planned to wait for two months perhaps before they were mar-

ried. But now he went away for a few days, gathered his available resources and they ran away and were married, cutting the whole agony short.

As I have said, Mrs. Ferris was relieved about it all and was spared the spectacle of a wedding that in her eyes would have been no wedding at all.

But the thought that occurs to me again and again is "What if it had not been Stuart Gordon? What if some man had come along who would have profited by Olivia's recklessness and by her innocence?" I think she should have been taught to face the emotions that life would inevitably bring her without shame and accept them and govern them. I do not think she should have been brought up to believe that the beatings of her heart were shameful, which meant only that she was growing up. She should not have thought them any more shameful than the slow unfolding of her body.

It brings us back to the point that society is blind; it teaches girls that when once lost, all is lost. I wonder, too, what would have happened had Aershot been an ungoverned and unprincipled man instead of one who played carefully. It is useless to say a good girl would not act this way. When a woman is in love that instinctive chastity of which we hear so much is apt to prove a myth, since we have been brought up for generations to do the bidding of the man who can make us love him.

In telling Olivia Ferris' story I am sure I am telling in part a story which many women have also experienced.



ALL the men who have mysteriously disappeared either ran away with or from a woman.



CLAY FEET

By Hugh Kahler

VERY early in his acquaintance with Annabelle Irene, Mr. A. C. Fibb discovered that, in spite of that lady's high regard for all forms of virtue, she shared the feminine failing which inclines the primmest of the sex to shelter a secret and awed admiration for Lothario, Don Juan, et al. Wherefore, for the first time in his career, Mr. Fibb justified his libellous patronym and embarked upon a career of reckless deception. His reasoning proved accurate. Fascinated by her instinct to probe the mysterious recesses of a lurid past, the wholly desirable Annabelle Irene became Mrs. A. C. Fibb, and even in the early hours of connubial bliss her erring spouse realized that his days of truthfulness were at an end. If Annabelle Irene should ever discover that his nethermost descent upon the broad and easy path had been the consumption of one-eighth of a glass of beer, in his twenty-second year, he would no longer occupy the centre of her stage, bask in the warmth of her undivided adoration, would become the prosaic breadwinner instead of the mysterious and absorbing riddle. Wherefore, not without sundry agonized tweaks of a conscience which balked at the whitest of white lies, Mr. Fibb set about the task of providing himself with the necessary allure of past romance.

Now, when a man is all of five feet three in his highest heels, when his eyes are the innocuous tint of the robin's fresh-laid egg and his lashes rival the pallor of a new straw hat, when his chin slants abruptly in the wrong direction and his shoulders bow in the book-keeper's academic stoop, it is no

easy task to acquire and maintain the reputation of even a reformed rake. Not even Annabelle Irene called him otherwise than by his two initials. "Augustus Cæsar" was too obviously due to unwarranted poetic license and parental optimism. A. C. he was to all who knew him. And yet despite his handicaps in the matter of appearance, despite his utter lack of educational experience, A. C. succeeded. Irene confidently believed him a brand snatched from complete conflagration, a providentially reformed social pirate. And as such she adored him, cherished him, darned, mended and cooked for him, asking in return only the occasional lifting of the veil which hid the dreadful history of his past.

At first A. C. found this a simple matter. It was enough to hint distantly at events impossible to describe to any virtuous lady; A. C. had merely to say: "It isn't fit for you to hear, my dear," to satisfy the need of the moment. But, as Annabelle Irene passed the age of unsophistication, as certain blushful topics of converse lost their terrors and became commonplace, this method failed. And details, steadily more circumstantial, were decidedly in order. Out of a blameless past, A. C. could produce not even the basis for the type of reminiscence Annabelle's fondly horrified attitude required. His invention, limited at best, was utterly inadequate to the demands of a continuous performance which made Scheherazade's thousand-chapter serial seem like a one-reel chaser. Wherefore the desperate Augustus Cæsar had recourse to the second-hand fount of literature. It was his salvation that, about this time, the

great American public suddenly discovered that a spade may be called at least a spade in cold, black print without causing any cataclysm of nature, and sundry periodicals of very free speech flourished like bay-trees. These rescued Mr. Fibb in the very nick of time.

Surreptitiously he read them in the subway, on his way to and from the five-room flat in the Bronx, first removing their tell-tale covers, of course. His innocence found some of them provocatively obscure, but as his own sophistication progressed and the shackles of literature were struck off, one by one, this difficulty disappeared. Out of his literary browsings Augustus Cæsar culled here and there a plot within the possibilities. Obviously, to his secret regret, the tale of the artist, the Russian princess and the tiger-skin had to be foregone in favor of a prosaic adventure with a manicure; mournfully he denied himself the hero's role in a thrilling affair involving an opera-singer and memorized the humdrum exploit of the bill-clerk and the stenographer. There was something of the artist in Augustus Cæsar Fibb. He preserved the dramatic unities as sedulously as Sophocles himself, and by no better guidance than untutored instinct. With all the fields of highly fanciful literature from which to draw, he kept his feet straitly upon the paths of probability. Sometimes he sighed for the grander roles, but heroically he thrust the temptation from him.

And he had his reward—ah, a reward such as few fictioneers receive! For, as the whispered confessions thrilled through the darkness—Fibb could not have concealed his blushes, nor Irene, for all her avid trustfulness, believed his words in the garish light of a sixteen-candle-power bulb—Annabelle Irene's gasp of shocked amazement was sure to be followed by the adoring clasp of Annabelle Irene's soft arms, the grateful thrill of Annabelle Irene's beloved lips. And though your taste and mine might hold the payment low, remember that to the fatuous Au-

gustus Cæsar Fibb not one of the imaginary heroines of hectic print could even faintly rival the charms of Annabelle Irene.

Friendly editors tell me that I shall never rise in this profession. They would have me fashion tales according to set rules of literature, introduce my complications, climaxes and surprises in strict accordance with the canons of a strait-laced art. If I listened to their kindly intentioned counsels, I should proceed to paint for you the career of Annabelle Irene and her adored Augustus without regard to what actually happened; I should guide them gently down the afternoon slope of the hillside with her eyes unopened to the deception and his self-sacrifice rewarded by her ever-growing adoration. I could make a pretty picture of it if I were not cursed with this eternal itch to deal with brutal facts and let the dainty fancies pass unheeded. And, though this truthful tale return to me a thousand times from callous readers, I shall not deviate. This is what came of A. C. Fibb's expedient:

He educated himself. Instead of the shut-in mind with which he entered upon his marital career, he acquired a close and intimate acquaintance with every conceivable disguise of the universal adventure. Not one expedient of the craft but was known to him; every possible rendition of the everlasting triangle was neatly filed away in his orderly, mathematical brain, classified and indexed for instant reference as infallibly as his loose-leaf ledger-pages in the transfer files at the coke offices. Again and again when some hard-driven writer succeeded in appropriating a time-honored plot and re-disguising it so that reader and editor failed to detect its ancient and dishonorable descent, Augustus Fibb smiled cynically as he read it, and told himself precisely when and where it had appeared before. He would have been worth much money in a magazine office. And scores of authors would have hated him with the hate that passeth understanding.

He had married at twenty-four. By

the time he was thirty he had related to Annabelle a chain of adventures which would have required at least a lifetime and, as she herself grew out of her first easy credulity, he found it necessary to reduce his exploits to writing. Tucked away in his desk was a cryptic manuscript in which each week of his premarital career was accounted for, in which each of his imaginary adventures was located as to time and place. So thoroughly did Augustus Cæsar memorize this history that he could have withstood the cross-examination of a divorce lawyer upon any detail of the lengthy list. And with alarm he observed that the blank weeks were growing few, so that perforce he shortened the endurance of his amorous achievements until, had Annabelle remembered dates and places as accurately as he, she must have begun to doubt him long before she—but it would be a shame to hurt the editor's feelings with an anticlimax. Patience, patience, reader—you have simply *got* to be surprised or I shall never sell this tale and you will never read it.

With his vast store of dramatic properties, it is not to be supposed that Mr. Fibb remained in ignorance of that thread-bare plot whereat even neophytes reading their first manuscript in the publishing office have long since begun to groan, the pawn-ticket-sable-fur skeleton. Perhaps this really happened. More probably it didn't. The reader may be innocent enough not to have heard it, so let us condense it for the kindergarteners present. A married woman most reprehensibly receives from the gentleman to whom she is *not* married a magnificent set of sables. Give her the benefit of the doubt and assume that the furs are but the token of a distant and respectful regard; the fact remains that she dare not reveal their source to her spouse, nor may she hope to wear them without accounting to him for their presence in her possession. Yet she cannot bear not to wear them. A hard riddle, till the pawn-ticket solution was invented. That makes it grotesquely easy. She hocks

the furs for five dollars, hands husband the ticket, which she says she has found. He redeems the furs, greatly rejoicing, and everything is lovely. Of course there are numberless subvariants. Sometimes the husband is a rascal, too, and brings his wife a ratty set of squirrel, his stenographer, manicure or other affinity subsequently sporting the sables. Sometimes he just loses the ticket. You can dress it up to suit yourself. Only, if you will take my advice, you will mail your story to the editor. It is not safe to bring such things in person to the sanctum.

Mr. Fibb, as I said, was familiar with every variation of this plot. I grieve to say it, but more than once, in his imaginary exploits, had the victims of his fatal charms made use of the device wherewith to befool their trusting better-halves. And, remembering this familiarity on his part, you can imagine his feelings when, returning to his flat with a brand-new adventure firmly fixed in his mind for the evening's conversation, he found Annabelle Irene in a state of high excitement. Waving a smudged yellow card before him she chortled gleefully:

"See what I found, A. C.! A ticket for a diamond solitaire!"

His heart stood still. Mechanically he stretched out a trembling hand and took the damning bit of pasteboard from her. It was true! A pawn-ticket, calling for diamond solitaire upon the payment of the trifling sum of three dollars and the legal interest thereon! Even in the first stupendous, stunning shock of his newborn suspicion, he was dully conscious a red rage of outraged self-esteem. That the wife of his bosom should accept gifts of great price from a rival admirer was deplorable, ghastly. But that she should attempt to hoodwink *him*—Augustus Cæsar Fibb, hero of a thousand intricate adventures beneath the rose—master of every shade and nuance of intrigue—with a device so shabbily threadbare, so frequent in the annals of the sport—here was insult more grievous even than the injury!

And mark you how his literary training came nobly to his rescue. Instinctively he dissembled. To display the lightest signal of suspicion at this stage would rob him of his vengeance, forestall his otherwise certain discovery of the culprit. He gulped down his wrath and managed to return Annabelle's enthusiastic kiss to her satisfaction.

"Isn't it perfectly great!" she cried. "I've—I've never told you, A. C., but I've always wanted a solitaire. You never gave me an engagement-ring. And now I'll have one! I'm so happy!"

He repeated his sickly smile. "I'll see if it's any good," he temporized. "If they only loaned three dollars on it, it can't be very valuable—that's sure."

The very words of Lord Algernon de Courcy to Lady Madeline in "The Dumb Duke"! He shuddered as the memory thudded home to him. He, Augustus Fibb, echoing the feeble inanity of a silly ass at whom he had mocked in cynical superiority even as he read about him! Somehow he endured the torture of the supper, with Annabelle discoursing happily of her long-overdue solitaire. So, after all they had been to each other, she had allowed a bit of glimmering carbon, proffered by some moneyed scoundrel, to outweigh his years of loving care and tender protection! And this was the woman for whose regard he had almost nightly perjured his once guiltless soul! This was his payment for the patient years of painful lying! He could not swallow the food, and when, alarmed by this symptom of what she regarded as physical illness, Annabelle insisted upon ministering to him from her favorite patent-medicine bottle and hurrying him into bed with a hot flat-iron at his feet, he submitted unprotesting, glad of the chance to escape in feigned slumber from the ordeal of playing his ungracious role. He lay awake for hours after Annabelle Irene fell audibly asleep, facing the desperate future as bravely as she felt a man of his history would face it, pondering the proper course for a worldly-wise husband when

confronted by a transparent deception such as this. In the morning he was still at sea. But the thrall of Annabelle Irene was still strong on him. In his turn he felt the fascination which springs coexistent with suspicion. Another man had looked upon this woman and found her good to look upon. His taste was vindicated—his judgment confirmed. And as flying blessings must invariably brighten, so, as he watched Annabelle Irene dressing, softly, so that he might have every possible moment of rest before the office called him, he realized bitterly that, be she never so faithless, never so unworthy of an abiding passion such as his, she must always be for him the One Woman! He shut his eyes and made his resolution. At any cost, he would hide his knowledge, feign ignorance, and, while striving to regain the forfeited affection of his false innamorata, seek sedulously to unmask the intruding villain and this done, drive him irresistibly from the sacred precincts of the domicile of Fibb! He groaned dolefully several times as he dressed, at the expense of a double dose of Dr. Mocher's Mild Miraculous Medicament before he set forth for the office.

At noon he sacrificed his reviving appetite upon the altar of marital devotion, and spent his lunch-hour in a journey to the pawn-shop. It proved to be a prosperous establishment on the Bowery, where a keen-eyed young clerk accepted his three dollars, plus eighteen cents for interest and delivered to him a sparkling blazing stone, set in a narrow circlet of gold—just what Annabelle Irene would love! Just what she had yearned for all these lean years of near-poverty! He tucked it carefully into his pocket, wondering whimsically whether she would wear it while she washed *his* dishes and mended *his* frayed hosiery. He gave her credit for too fine a nature for that. Faithless she might be, but *some* things would still be sacred to her. The thought comforted him. He survived his eternal afternoon at his ledgers and the endless journey homeward in the packed mass

of human cattle, and steeled his nerves for the ordeal of the presentation before inserting his latchkey in his front-door.

Annabelle Irene shrieked with delight at the sight of the ring. But even before she tried it on her wedding-ring finger, she threw her hands, still wet from her kitchen activities, about his neck and kissed him so tenderly that he marvelled at her acting. Had he been any less adept Lothario than Augustus Cæsar Fibb she would have deceived him. Dully he watched her tug at her wedding ring, until she drew it off over a work-swollen knuckle. Inwardly he approved of this. It was confirmation of his estimate of Annabelle Irene. She might accept jewels from another man, but she did not lower herself to the plane of donning the symbol of her frailty without removing the symbol of her forfeited wifehood. And then, with a queer, numbing shock, he saw that the ring was many sizes too small for her! Strive as she would she could not persuade it past even the first joint of the third finger. She replaced her wedding ring and compromised by wearing the solitaire beside it on her little finger, which it fitted loosely. For full ten minutes, while her cooking burnt unheeded, she admired the trinket wholeheartedly. Thrice she kissed the agonized Augustus Cæsar—and each time her lips pressed his he thrilled even as he told himself it was the kiss of Judas! For already he had pierced the mystery. The unknown adorer was a man of more than ordinary acumen, so much was plain, but he had reckoned without knowing the mettle of his antagonist. It was diabolically clever to select a ring far too small for the finger it was meant to adorn! With this improvement even the ancient expedient would have deceived a less subtle husband. But the eagle eye of Augustus Cæsar was keener than the careless glance of any unskilled spouse. He recognized the improvement and admired its ingenuity, even as he raged inwardly at what it signified. And, still intent upon his design of discovery and revenge, he

returned Annabelle's smiles across the supper-table, listened to her speculations as to the probable cost of enlarging the circlet and consented willingly to her proposal that this matter be left in her hands. She would take the treasure-trove to the little jeweler around the corner, the very next morning, and, if his charge proved reasonable, would entrust the duty of fitting it to her finger to him. Even as he nodded his approval, Augustus Cæsar Fibb understood. She would meet HIM at the cursed jewelry store; HE would never allow her to bear the expense of enlarging his gift to suit her beloved hand. HE would appear to complete his trickery. And, let him beware the penalty of his iniquitous intrusion upon the hearth of Fibb! For upon the unsuspecting, guilty pair would descend like the thunderbolt the avenging person of Augustus Cæsar! It would be too simple! In spite of his wrath and his heart-ache, Augustus nearly laughed outright at the thought! They took him for a fool, did they? Well, they should see! And, with the notion came the sudden hope that, a witness of his anger and his vengeance, with full proof of his alert and worldly-wise perspicuity before her, Annabelle Irene would repent of her folly, return to her duty, renew her interrupted love for him. He saw himself magnanimously forgiving her, telling her that a man who had needed so much forgiveness himself must be prodigal in extending it to lesser offenders. By the time he had followed this pleasing train of thought to its inevitable conclusion he was thoroughly pleased with himself. After all, he reflected, it is only the weaklings who repine and suffer. Strong men carve out their own destiny and bend unyielding Fate herself to suit their wills. And he, Augustus Cæsar Fibb, was strong—a strong man even among giants!

He gulped his breakfast next morning, eager to be off upon the one real adventure of his life. He kissed Annabelle Irene goodbye and bolted down the three flights of stairs as though the

pursuit were a matter of minutes. In the drug-store around the corner he took up his post, explaining to the soda-clerk that he was waiting for a business friend with whom he had on a "deal." At eight-thirty he telephoned his excuses to the office, knowing full well that he would be docked for the lost time, and half-rejoicing in the knowledge that even this prospect failed utterly to swerve him from his stern resolve to see the matter through to its grim conclusion, at the risk of a rebuke from the Chief himself! For an immortal hour he waited, before, with his heart in his throat, he saw Annabelle Irene, clad in her finest, hurry past the window toward the jeweler's shop three doors beyond. He waited until he was sure that she had had time to enter it, and then he followed. A man, a big, burly, broad-shouldered brute, entered the jeweler's just as Augustus reached the street. To his eternal honor be it written that he forgot his own five-feet three, his eight-inch biceps, his thirty-one-inch chest in his zeal to wreak dire and dismal vengeance upon the offender. He was out of breath when he entered the shop, but it was from exertion and not excitement. Annabelle stared at him in amazement. The big man who stood beside her surveyed him without interest and the little jeweler greeted him with a friendly smile. Before the other could speak, the shopkeeper broke the silence.

"Ah, Mr. Fibb," he exclaimed, cordially. "You are just in time to receive a certain disappointment, I'm afraid. I have bad news for you!"

The store reeled around Augustus Cæsar. So the little jeweler was a party to this infamous assault upon his home and honor! And he had the colossal impudence to announce it without hesitation or shame!

"I was just telling Mrs. Fibb," continued the jeweler, heedless of Fibb's stunned look, "that it would really be a useless expense to have this ring enlarged to fit her—it would cost more than it is worth."

"What?" stammered Augustus

feebly. "I don't understand—how can——"

"You have been cheated, I'm sorry to say," said the shopkeeper. "This is a cheap paste affair, and the ring itself is not even plated. You can buy plenty like it at any five - and - ten - cent store."

For a moment Fibb was ready to believe. And then his literary schooling came to his rescue. Of course that would be the proper play for the jeweler! Time and again he had read about the ladies who claimed to be wearing Woolworth jewelry. He laughed, a short, sharp utterly cynical laugh.

"Oh, come," he said knowingly. "Don't try to tell me that—"

The big man took a hand in the conversation.

"That's right, Brother," he announced good-naturedly. "They sent me up from the station to see about it. Higgins, here, has had seven of these fakes brought in in the last two days and he puts us wise. It's the same old gag. I thought it was played out, but I guess that song about the birth-rate is still straight—there's one born every minute."

"Who—who are you?" demanded Augustus Cæsar, realizing for the first time the unpleasant discrepancy between heavy-weight and bantam pugilists. The big man opened his coat and revealed his badge of office. "A policeman!" gasped Mr. Fibb. "What—how—why——"

"Oh, don't worry! I ain't going to make any pinch!" said the plain-clothes man good-naturedly. "You've been stung and that's enough. Why, ain't you wise to this old stuff? A hock-shop sends out a kid with a pocket full of fake tickets like the one your wife found. The kid spreads 'em around the street. The easy mark finds one. He don't try to see who lost it—he's wild to cash in on a good sparkler for the price of a subway ticket. So he beats it down to the hock-shop, pays the fake loan and comes away with a nice piece of tin and a lump of glass!"

"Oh!" said Mr. Fibb, weakly.

"Oh!" said Annabelle Irene. Together they walked out of the store.

"What are you doing—away from the office?" inquired Mrs. Fibb.

"I—I thought I'd like to help you fix it up about the ring," said Augustus Cæsar, rising to the emergency like the best of his favorite fiction-characters. His wife surveyed him for a full minute in unfriendly fashion.

"Do you want to know what *I* think?" she said slowly. "I think you don't know very much, A. C. Fibb! I think you—you aren't so wise as you make out to be. I think, A. C., that you've been fooling me for six years! I don't

believe you ever butted around with the wise folks you've talked about. I don't believe you ever went to Boston with that French girl—or to Atlantic City with the manicure, either. I think you're just a plain, honest, respectable citizen and a perfectly awful liar, A. C. Fibb! And you'd better beat it to the office or you'll get docked the price of Sunday dinner!"

Precisely eight weeks later Annabelle Irene eloped with Izzy Winston (née Weinstein) occasionally employed as extra-man by the Continental Photodrama Corporation. A. C. Fibb now has a large Sunday-school class.



RESURRECTION

By Theresa Helburn

LOVE met me not till I was old,
But then she came with arms wide-spread,
With tapestries of woven gold
My barren path she carpeted.

She hung strange blossoms in my hair,
And bade the silent birds to sing,
Till youth awoke, amazed, to share
This resurrection of the spring.

And I, whose path had been with pain
Forgot the sorrow and the cold;
The future spread its wings again,—
I was not young till I was old.



TRUTH is stranger than fiction in the same sense that an earthquake is stranger than a thunderstorm.

LAUS NOVÆ VENERIS

By W. L. D. Bell

I SAW her one day at Long Beach. She was in the surf, and a great wave breaking over her made her seem to rise out of the very foam, an imperious, disdainful figure outlined against the gray horizon. She was no longer young. Her lips were colorless, her skin riddled with fine lines, her form almost that of a skeleton. But she stood, arms folded, head held high, looking into immeasurable distance with the eyes of a weatherbeaten eagle, and there was about her that penetrating charm which lingers in old ruins seen at dusk,—in her poise a certain indestructible elegance, in the long, wet masses of black hair a certain vitality, in her very presence all the fascination

of an autumn sunset. Time and love had marked her with cruel talons, but though battered a bit, she remained invincible. And in her eyes smoldered phosphorescent gleams such as appear in pools of water at dead of night, or among the thick shadows of caves where hidden treasures seem to scintillate vaguely—

And I thought of a new Venus rising from the sea, a subdued and chilled Venus, a twentieth-century Venus, a Venus in a minor key, touched by time, greeted by a sunless dawn, sated, weary, superb, and revealing in the profound melancholy of her great eyes all her sadness at the thought of another futile day of love yet to come.



PAPYRUS

By Ruth Comfort Mitchell

FRINGING a silent stream in Sicily
It stands remote, a link of living green,
Exultant in its deathlessness, between
Present and past, enduring as the sea.
Far from its ancient home but proud to be
The last of all its legion, like a queen
In exile, brooding ever on some scene
Of former glory . . . prisoner, yet free.
Dynasties perish; palaces are dust;
The templed shrine of Zeus a ruin lies:
Yet here, immune from time's destroying thrust,
It lives aloof and hoards its precious prize,
Secure, inviolate, a sacred trust,
Until another Homer shall arise.

THE SYNCOPATED LOVERS

By Richard Le Gallienne

"I CANNOT live without you, for one second, from now on," a young man was saying with a fine earnestness, as he looked into the quite unfairly beautiful eyes of a certain young woman, eyes in which romance and humor were dangerously blended.

"Nor I either," said the young woman, whose armoury included dazzling shoulders emerging from her corsage like magnolia blossoms from their sheaths, and a figure generally suggestive of dryads, nymphs of the chase, and such like perils once mythological, but now to be sought, or fled, rather in drawing-rooms than at the edges of forest pools.

"All my life has led up to this moment," said the young man, with a fathomless depth of conviction.

"Mine too," said the young woman.

No one could have doubted their sincerity, and though both in their way were humorists, and for some reason or another smiled almost broadly as they said it, yet both meant it, and indeed were as utterly serious as only two people can be who have known each other for barely five minutes, and realized that they had been intended to meet from the beginning of the world. And they were not even in the conservatory, but in full view of Lady Mary's ballroom, and of any eyes not exclusively engaged in their own affairs.

"I knew it," whispered Lady Mary, rustling by them just then, and tapping the young man's shoulder with her fan, and sweeping off again with a sympathetic nod, as much as to say that she meant to leave them sacredly to themselves. The same remark was made up

and down the room as amused faces in various laughing groups turned a moment in their direction.

"Quite gone already!" exclaimed several acquaintances, to whom the young man's record as a quick-change artist of the affections was common knowledge and entertainment.

"Do you blame him?" said another, motioning admiringly at his beautiful companion.

"He's met his match this time," said another.

"Who is she?" asked a third.

"*La belle sauvage*—from our American colonies," said a wit, with a monocle.

Meanwhile, to this kindly cynical accompaniment, to which they were too sophisticated to be oblivious, and which they were too much in earnest to heed, our young man and young woman went on with the serious business of the moment, I mean of their lives.

As neither made use of them, either there or thereafter, their surnames in this world of space and time strike me as irrelevant. As well indeed ask the surnames of two stars at some moment of dazzling conjunction. But, of course, their Christian names were another matter. How softly they gave and took them one to the other, sacred names never spoken on earth before.

"So you are—Jane!" said he.

"And you are—Jack!" said she.

And for awhile all language seemed exhausted, all dictionaries of all tongues concentrated, in those two names that so astonishingly said everything worth saying.

Yet, for a proper appreciation of this miracle, it must, before we proceed

further, be thoroughly understood that Jack and Jane alike had not lived for respectively twenty-nine and twenty-three years on a highly sophisticated planet without making previous romantic use of their time. The beautiful truth was notoriously to the contrary, and the situation appealed alike to the romance and humor of each, because both were well aware that each had heard and said precisely the same things more than once or twice before. Still it was equally true that they now said them for the first time—for there are some statements that never lose their virginity in utterance. Perhaps beautiful things have to be said many times before they are true; and, at all events, certain three words spoken with great feeling on this occasion had surely never been so true before and could never be so true again.

"I love you," said Jack, by way of good night, as he saw Jane home to her hotel.

"I love you," said Jane, as he pressed his lips to her hand, and reluctantly turned away into the London night, or rather the London morning, for a May dawn was already filling the green park with misty gold, and the early market-wagons were making Piccadilly sweet with country smells—just as they do in books.

A rose from one of these wagons was in Jane's bosom as she sat with Jack at luncheon on the morrow in a fashionable restaurant overlooking the Thames, near enough to the other gay, good-looking people and the music to share in the general exhilaration, and yet sufficiently secluded to be alone with each other's eyes.

That first luncheon with a woman one has only known for a few hours and already wildly loves! of all the various thrilling stages in the progress of a passion perhaps this is the most exquisitely happy. There she sits, still a beautiful stranger, exhaling the intoxicating perfume of the unknown, a being all early dew and morning magic, a mysterious flower, fold within fold of hidden sweetness, an embodied fra-

grance, a breathing wonder—still a beautiful stranger, and yet filled with a divine friendliness, already ours as in a fairy intimacy of promise, breathlessly luminous through veils of dawn with imminent, maddening revelation.

"O Jack!"

"O Jane!"

How wonderful that sudden rapturous intimacy of two entire strangers, who know absolutely nothing of each other, and yet know everything, fathomlessly sure of each other, and fathomlessly ignorant!

Perhaps there is no need to say that, had their luncheon table suddenly changed into an altar, the restaurant band into church-music, the gravely interested, dignified old waiter into a surpliced clergyman, our young people would have made the necessary responses there and then, and asked no more mundane knowledge of each other than the evidence of their beatified senses. So marriages are undoubtedly made in heaven, and so, at all events, they begin to be made on earth. Unfortunately, however, there is apt to supervene a world of tiresome detail and process between this divine beginning and the final far-off divine achievement; and thus, when Jane and Jack had agreed that it would be impossible to breathe apart for one second of future time, they had entirely ignored certain conditions, insignificant enough in that celestial ether where these brave statements were made, but of obdurate stability in a world of surnames.

Just as surely as they could not forever sit at enchanted luncheon, so surely was Jane down on a certain passenger-list to sail on the morrow for New York, and nothing short of the personal intervention of Aphrodite could prevent her sailing, and Jack being left behind on the pier, to live without her, not merely for one second, but for indeterminate weeks and months. Jane had lacked courage to impart this information the night before, and at once their idyl changed to tragic drama, Greek fates and dogging furies. And the tears shone in Jane's divine eyes, and

Jack's face grew as dark and stern with purpose as his golden blondness could agree to.

That these fates and furies were nothing more mythological than their respective families made them none the less real. Love is a mighty and great lord indeed, but a gouty uncle on whom all one's earthly prospects depend is a terrestrial being of some consequence too, and such was the situation on Jack's side—Jack being nothing, professional or otherwise, but a charming young Englishman, entirely useless. He didn't even write poetry. In a properly organized society people will be paid for being charming—at all events, when they are as charming as Jack was; and, as a matter of fact, Jack's existence depended on his charming uncle. For that he expected to be paid by a great inheritance, but his uncle, though gouty, was a rakish old gentleman, with that tough constitution which the pursuit of pleasure requires, and seemed good for many more unregenerate years. Besides, except for a few crotchets, he was a lovable old pagan, to whom even an expectant heir could wish no ill.

Jane's circumstances were more conventional. The one spoiled and petted daughter of rich American parents, she had been capriciously studying Europe chaperoned only by her maid; and an urgent call of illness at home, which she half suspected was a pious fiction, had been needed to break the spell of old-world cities and cosmopolitan society. Till she had met Jack, she had divided her heart among music, a Russian prince, a young American diplomat at the Embassy in Paris, and a young Irish poet. Today at luncheon, however, it was all undividedly Jack's—today, and forever. Let there be no manner of doubt as to that. And surely no one who had seen her taking farewell of Jack on the morrow could have had a moment's doubt on the subject.

She was sailing from Southampton, and Jack, of course, had been on hand at Waterloo station tragically assisting her with her baggage; but, as the

guard's whistle had set the train moving, the yawning separation had been too much for him, and springing into the compartment, Jane and he had journeyed blissfully to Southampton in each other's arms, a passionate *melée* of tears and kisses, protestations eternal, wet, gleaming eyes and misty, loosened hair.

At the tender again, how could they bear it? The officials in charge of the gangway recognized only the official, well-ordered feelings of relations, but agreed at length to accept Jack's word—or rather his money—to the effect that he was Jane's brother, lawfully seeing her off, and so passed him on board. Then last pang of all, when Jane, aloft at the ship's side, and Jack, abysses below, on the deck of the tender, played a heart-breaking balcony scene for the benefit of entirely unnoted, but not entirely hardened, on-lookers. Good-looking people need never fear a public display of the emotions. It is becoming and wins sympathy even from a cynical audience. And Jane's and Jack's farewells were of so touching a nature, the tears streamed down their cheeks with such sincerity of abandon, they called impromptu poetry to each other with such extempore eloquence, that even the smart officers were moved, and old ladies shed tears in company, thinking of the days before they weighed two hundred pounds.

At last two handkerchiefs that cannot be sure of each other, but wave on the desperate chance of their being the right ones, are all that remain to the eye of all that passionate drama of young hearts, and even they too are soon engulfed in the infinite of sea and sky, as the great ship grimly sets down to its business of putting asunder those whom God had joined together.

Far away on the sea, Jane lies face down in her berth, crying as if her heart would break, and far away on the land, waiting his train to town, Jack stands drinking three whiskies and soda in heart-breaking succession; and it was genuine grief in both cases,

though superficially different in its expression.

Such was Jane and Jack's first meeting and first parting.

Now it is written, that, however wide one's opportunity of experience, the world still contains for us at twenty-three, and even at twenty-nine, quite a number of charming people we have yet to meet, till we have met whom, been tried and tested by their charm, we are as yet undergraduates of life, and indeed yet incompletely acquainted with ourselves. These charming people serve various useful purposes in our lives; but among others, they picturesquely brighten those periods of *ennui* which intervene between one great passion and another, or those pauses which are apt to mark the interrupted progress of that one supreme comprehensive passion which finally becomes the whole of life.

These invaluable touchstones of our experience provide what in less philosophical language are called flirtations, those experimental exercises in the art of love, which not merely perfect our technique, but, in the end teach us the value and satisfaction of lasting attachments. No true love is safe till it has survived a succession of more or less serious flirtations.

Now when Jane and Jack thus met and loved and parted they had previously been in love—Jane some sixteen, and Jack some score, times. The all-wise God who has the hearts of true lovers watchfully in his care saw that this record was not enough. Therefore, he had placed on board the steamer from which Jane's handkerchief had fluttered so pathetic a farewell a young French count of dangerous good looks and many accomplishments. This young count had been an interested spectator of Jane's dramatic farewell, and he had reflected with satisfaction on his having chanced to take his passage on this particular boat. His previous impatience that it was a nine-day boat had been quite forgotten as he caught sight of that beautiful vision so becomingly glittering with tears.

Habit is strong, misery loves company, youth is youth and all is vanity. Though Jane's heart was breaking for Jack, there was surely no treason in her making a charming toilette for dinner that first sad night at sea, nor, because she chanced to find herself seated next to a really fascinating embodiment of that fairy City of Paris, which was for her the capital of fairyland, could she be expected to have her place changed to some less entertaining proximity—in short, Jane and the Count proved such congenial companions that, long before the trip was over, Jane had only entirely to forget Jack to be mistress of a chateau in Touraine and a brilliant hotel in the Bois de Boulogne, and a quite delightful companion for husband into the bargain. Still, tender mid-Atlantic passages to the contrary, such as romantic habits and circumstances might be said to necessitate, Jane neither had forgotten Jack, nor intended to forget him; so that when New York was at length reached in all the exhilaration of the glittering American morning, the Count was entitled to regard himself as possibly high up on Jane's writing-list, but no more. Still, as he contemplated a long stay in the country, he had some reason for confidence, though the rapturous greeting of a manly young American who made off with Jane the moment she stepped on to the pier, and who allowed himself to be introduced to the Count with no great show of cordiality, gave that nobleman to understand that in America as in Europe Jane's heart was likely to be a bitterly contested prize. However, his cynical humour found comfort in the remembrance of that parting at Southampton. If only this nonchalant, confident young American could have witnessed that too—or that absurdly romantic Englishman could have witnessed this tender meeting in New York! Ah well, there was safety in numbers, and the Count was shrewd enough to reflect that the chances of his American rival would have been stronger if he had allowed Jane to look for him in vain on the pier, instead of

meeting her with such faithful punctuality—a sort of expectant gangplank for her little careless feet to walk over. Still there is nothing like the freshness of the familiar after a long absence, and for the next week or two Jack's memory had to share his idol's thoughts with certain prior American claimants who possessed that dangerous form of novelty which comes of renewed acquaintance. And Jane's American court was by no means a small one. However, as Jane told herself, she was only comparing them all with Jack, and letters by every mail gave that faithful heart every reason to picture America as a wilderness where no man was.

In the course of a few weeks these letters were being addressed to Carlsbad. The change of address, she hardly knew why, gave her a pang of uneasiness. It was true that Jack was there merely in attendance on his uncle's gout, waiting, as he had explained, a propitious turn in that whimsical malady to confide the state of his heart to an uncle who he had reasons for knowing—though this he did not confide to Jane—was bitterly prejudiced against Americans, and had designs of his own for his nephew's future. Still Carlsbad was a gay place, full of romantic pitfalls, and Jane would have preferred to picture Jack still standing—all these months—in tears on the bobbing deck of the tender. As a matter of fact, it was in a similar attitude of farewell that Jack, all these months, was picturing his Jane. Thus each took comfort, and for each the days went by.

Days, months, and at last a year. Meanwhile, the Count had returned to Europe, faint, yet pursuing, and one or two other young Americans had been added to Jane's waiting list. Jack had written in profane despair that his uncle was an obdurate old idiot and had resolutely and painfully put his gouty foot down upon his young dream, threatening to cut him off forever, etc., but he adjured Jane to be faithful, professing his undying resolve to marry her, or no one. Somehow the alternative chilled her, the phrase was ill

chosen. Perhaps the American in her would have preferred a little less waiting on events. Perhaps the thought suggested itself that Jack might have told his uncle to go to the devil, and started out to make a million in six months in true western fashion; or even have come over the sea, and run off with her first and thought of ways and means the day after. But then, you see, Jack was an Englishman. That was, of course, one of his charms. Yet, she couldn't help the thought sometimes that she had only to ask one of her American lads to go fetch her the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, for him to be off and back with it in a week or two, with a house on Fifth Avenue into the bargain. Thus you see too that Jane was an American—by no means the least of her charms either.

So syncopation began to enter into the music of these two hearts, and presently—however, let us leave Jane awhile.

It was again May, but this time Paris.

The air of the Bois was like some magic wine, perfumed with acacias and beautiful women, and, like the heart of some secret garden, the Chateau de Madrid was thronged with the enchantress and the enchanted, beings of supernatural elegance, human flowers almost too fair to be human, taking tea with adoring exquisites, lapped in soft music and early summer fragrance. There amid the perfumed hum, crowded in among the flower-boxes and the mirrors that multiplied the gay scene in a hundred directions, sat Jack, *tête-à-tête* with a bewitching creature in a toilette of ethereal blue, blonde as Ceres and blue-eyed as forget-me-not.

Jack was leaning towards her in an attitude that had long been a habit with him under such circumstances, and one could not have been blamed for thinking that, as the birds sing the same songs each May, he was saying once more: "I cannot live without you, for one second, from now on." And, again, one could hardly have blamed him, but no! it was not so bad as that. Jack was by no means so much in love as he may

have seemed to an observer out of ear-shot. Perhaps he was only trying to be in love, and, actually, he was not succeeding as well as might have been expected. As a matter of fact, his thoughts were but languidly occupied with the vision before him; for his heart was aching with the news, chance-borne to him that morning, as such news is apt to be, that Jane was soon to be married—a certain American, middle-aged, horribly rich and smart, the rumour said, a well-known "traction magnate," whatever that might mean. Therefore, as he sat there, in an attitude of apparent devotion, the blonde face before him, little as his companion could have suspected it, was replaced by a beauty brunette as night with its stars, magnetic with mystery as a young moon among the pines.

"You are *distract* this afternoon," said his fair apparition.

"It is the spring," he answered, laughingly girding himself to compliment, "and the April beauty of your eyes."

The false words had scarcely left his lips, when he was startled by a light touch on his shoulder.

"Hello, Jack!" said a never-to-be-forgotten voice, and turning—there was Jane! One glance of her great eyes, bright in their elfin mockery, and she was already several tables away, before Jack could realize that it was she, moving towards the entrance, the center of a little laughing group on their way out from the gay place. She turned again, threw him a long, enigmatic smile, and was lost among the flowers and the faces.

So he had met Jane for the second time! So she had seen him again—seen him just so—after all these months, after all those letters—had been watching him, no doubt, for the past half-hour, with cynical, misunderstanding eyes.

"You look as if you had seen a ghost," laughed his companion, not without malice.

"I have," he answered, careless of his manners, but added, with an attempt

to recover himself, "Some American friends I haven't seen for a long time."

"So it seemed," said the blonde dis-aster, "she is certainly very beautiful. I don't mind your going on thinking about her!"

Beautiful! what a fool he had been! Beautiful! had he really remembered all these months how beautiful she was? Had he realized, as, out of *ennui*, and the mere habit of flirtation, he had played with one fair face and another, that for him she was the only beautiful thing in the world? And now he had lost her forever!

Certainly it looked like it, for it was in vain that he sought her again, during the next following days, in all the likely places of Paris, at theaters and galleries and restaurants, frantically turning over hotel registers, haunting transportation offices and railway stations. She had come like a vision out of the air, and had gone like a butterfly on the summer winds. His lover's heart told him that she had left Paris. Suddenly it seemed empty, echoing, lost. She was gone, gone out of his life forever.

For several weeks previous, he had had no word from her, but had attributed it to miscarriage of mails, or some such malicious mis-ordering of the universe. So when his uncle announced that he was tired of Paris, he was glad enough to go. But the night before he left, there was a letter, forwarded from London, with the blue flag of a Southampton liner on the envelope: "Dear Jack," it ran, "this is good-bye. I hope you will be happy. I thought her quite beautiful. Some friends had told me of her. But don't say just the same pretty things you used to say. Let our *words* be our own. Let us keep those. Good-bye. Jane."

A month after came another little note, in answer to poor Jack's impassioned explanations: "Jack dear, I am sorry, but I can't have you write to me again. If only—but, never mind. You only thought you loved me."

Jane had married her traction magnate, in one of those impulses of *ennui*

to which perhaps the spoiled, imperious American girl is particularly subject. Her love for Jack had been the deepest thing she had known. It would perhaps haunt her forever. But the dream had been spoiled, or she thought so; and it was too much a dream to exchange for any of the half-dreams with which she, too, her conscience told her, had too carelessly played. So, she would be done with dreams, and make a sensible, distinguished marriage instead. And her "traction magnate" was a gentleman, at all events, and, besides, she was a child of luxury—there was no use in forgetting that—and would she have married Jack without a penny—after all? Her heart told her that she would—had he only been brave enough to ask her.

Now, a few days after Jack received what seemed his death-blow, the gout arrived at his uncle's heart—but alas! it was a month too late. All the kind old pagan's money couldn't buy a Jane.

So with his inheritance came none of that exhilaration which usually accompanies such turns of luck. Indeed to his friends Jack wore the air of a man who had lost rather than come into a fortune, and from being the most sociable of beings, he suddenly changed into the most morose and taciturn. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his—Jane! The irony of his sudden accession to worldly wealth filled him with the bitter irony of all things, and after a while it seemed as though his bitterness had changed into a veritable hatred of his new possessions, and a mad desire to cleanse himself of them, to dissipate them as speedily as possible. His first impulse had been to withdraw himself from his fellows, and a year or two went by in lonely wanderings about the wild and waste places of the earth, big game shooting in Africa—for which he didn't care a rush—explorations of the dangerous no-man's-lands of the East. He even threw himself into a local war among some disaffected tribes in China. But, if he was seeking some plausible opportunity to cast his life away, the

opportunity refused to oblige him. The beasts of the African jungle refused to eat him, tribesmen hardly less savage persisted in exasperating friendliness, and bullet and spear left him unscathed. So at length he returned to civilization, and plunged himself in the more perilous centres of European dissipation. Almost without a pretence of gaiety, he gathered about him a circle of the greediest spenders and wasters, and with a grim satisfaction saw his money vanishing on race-tracks and gaming tables, though it was noted that none of the plunder went to women—which was certainly a strange thing in Jack. Lavish expenditure in every other direction, reckless gambling at all the casinos of Europe—to such activities he applied himself with a haggard and feverish intensity. His old, more reputable acquaintances shook their heads. There could be only one end, as there could only be one salvation. Enterprising mothers, with beautiful unrealized assets in the form of unmarried daughters, lamented the squandering of so much good money. But, of all the various rumours that occasionally floated across to Jane in her American home, no whisper of an engagement ever by any chance crept in amongst them. And, as time went on, the possible significance of Jack's career began to be borne in upon the girl who could never quite forget that night at Lady Mary's ball, that luncheon table overlooking the glittering Thames, and for whom a certain packet of old letters still held the romance and wonder of the world.

But from Jack himself, all this time, of course, there came no word. He was taking his medicine, in his own way, and that he might still have a place in the thought of her whom he had so stupidly lost, and to whose memory he was making of his life so useless a sacrifice, never entered his mind. She was happy somewhere on the sunlit altitudes of the world, and he was forgotten—a part of the sentimental wreckage with which the path of beauty is strewn. It was all senseless enough, as he well

knew—but then it was love—love hopeless, devouring, only to end with the burnt-out ashes of a life whose use and purpose were forever destroyed. So men crossed in love have done before, so they will do again, to the end of the human story. It is an insane form of idealism. But what of that! Perhaps love is just that and nothing more. So Jack reasoned in his desperate heart, and so he wandered from gaming table to gaming table with the splendid riff-raff of Europe. Had he been a poet, he might have taken it all out in wild and whirling words, and presently come back to himself again. However, he had no such safety-valve; though, as chance would have it, he one day fell upon a poem in a magazine which seemed, curiously, as such things will, to have been written just for him, written by one poor broken-hearted devil for another. Probably the poet himself had forgotten it before it came to be printed, and had long since passed on to other emotions, but for Jack it was the present vivid cry of his own forlorn spirit. Here was the poem:

For lack and love of you, love,
 I pine the long days through;
 I waste the powers
 Of the rich hours,
 For lack and love of you.

For lack and love of you, love,
 All life is grown untrue;
 O I squander,
 And I wander,
 For lack and love of you.

For lack and love of you, love,
 I grow myself untrue;
 I am drowning,
 Drowning, drowning,
 For lack and love of you.

These lines became his daily litany, and brought him that curious, painful satisfaction which comes of probing an unhealed wound. So martyrs, maybe, luxuriate in their tortures. One day, in a mood of keenest self-pity, an impulse came over him. He told himself that it

was whimpering, unmanly, and perhaps even criminal, but finally it grew too strong to withstand. Folding up the magazine, he addressed and mailed it at a venture. An idle impulse—one that surely carried in it no intention of disquietude—for if, in a hundred chances, Jane's eyes should really fall upon the verses, had she not long since forgotten him? Ah unworthy piece of self-pitying egoism, at worst—at which Jane would probably smile.

Now actually, as has been hinted, Jack had not been forgotten. In fact, as the weeks and months of a tranquil, harmonious, commonplace marriage went by, his memory had been growing more perilously sweet, and bitter; and Jane, on her side, began to see, with clear, unhappy eyes, that the impulse which had given her hand to a kindly, indulgent gentleman she had never pretended to love had been a wrong done not only to one but to three people, and not least to her husband. Her marriage had been little but a marriage in name, and her heart and the hearts of two good men were empty, or worse, because of what she had wickedly done. And as the rumours of Jack's life grew darker and more persistent, she came to reproach herself with a graver responsibility. If he was making all possible haste to hell, whose doing was it but hers? His soul had been given into her keeping, and she had wantonly cast it away. And, ah! how she had loved him—yes! how she still loved him, after all. Thus a slow fever of remorse, and a smouldering fire of rebellion, began to possess her, and her eyes grew absent and homeless things.

It was to these eyes that Jack's poem eventually came, and as a careless spark fires a magazine, Jane saw as by a flash of lightning what she must do. Without Jack, or with him, her life could no longer go on as it was. She would go to her husband, she would confess the wrong she had done him, she would ask him to help her. And that night, pale, yet resolved, she told him all.

Perhaps there are more men than

would appear by the newspapers—and particularly in America—capable of the self-sacrifice that Jane's confession called upon her husband to make, all that his love could do for her; at all events, Jane's fate was not in the hands of a man who could be happy in the mere legal ownership of a beautiful body whose soul belonged to another.

"I have done you a great wrong," said Jane.

"I have cared only that you should be happy. Never mind me," said the kind fellow. "I should have known better myself."

If Jane's husband was a "traction magnate," he was, as has been said, a gentleman as well.

"You make me hate myself more than ever, and I never loved you so much as now," sobbed Jane, throwing herself into the kind arms that were so generously opening to let her go.

And the god who has the hearts of lovers in his keeping smiled a whimsical smile.

It was May once more, this time Monte Carlo. Jack had returned from play, the evening before, in a particularly reckless state of mind. A large portion of his rapidly dwindling possessions had been left behind on the tables, and dark thoughts of the probable end of it all had closed in upon him as he sank into a drugged and feverish sleep; but, with the morning, what was this, white and miraculous, on his breakfast

tray? His heart sprang up beating, as if it would break. It couldn't be, but O yes! it was a letter from Jane; half-a-dozen earth-changing words—*"Won't you lunch with me at one?"* What could it mean? Had he really gone mad at last?

But no, sitting opposite to him three hours afterwards, with music once more, and flowers, and gay, good-looking people—surely it was Jane.

"O Jane!"

"O Jack!"

And when all the story was told, and it had been agreed once more that this time, in very deed, there was to be no more living without each other for one second, for either of them, from then on—

"Why on earth didn't we do it at first?" said Jane.

"Because I was a prize idiot," answered Jack.

"No!" said Jane, laying her hand on his, "it was not that. It was because we were not really ready for each other. We had too much foolishness to work out of us. We wouldn't have been really happy then. We had too much to learn. All that syncopation was leading up to a simpler music. That first luncheon was only a prophecy—"

"Of this," added Jack.

"Say it again, Jack."

"I cannot live without you, for one second, from now on," Jack repeated.

"Nor I either," said Jane.



THE ring on a woman's finger is the badge of slavery—of him who put it there.



A WOMAN'S woman is only raw material; a man's woman is the cultivated variety.



BHARTRIHARI MAKES A HYMN TO TIME

TO thee, O Time, obeisance! To thee, O Time, all honor and submission! Before the gods were prattling in their heavens, thou wert a king upon a throne beyond the utmost stars, the axle of the universe in thy hand. In thee all wisdom begins and ends. In thee is the fount of all achievement and the grave of all hope. Thou alone art eternal.

The young man disports himself with the pleasures of the town, hearkening to the music-makers, kissing the red lips of women, dreaming his mad dreams. Thou waitest, O Time, for the young man. The poet makes him a verse in the shade of the tree by the river-bank, praising the gods in sweet, ingratiating words. Thou waitest, O Time, for the poet. The rich merchant stalks proudly through his stores of rice and sandalwood, of hides and cotton stuffs, driving his slaves to their labor, fingering the gold of his gains. Thou waitest, O Time, for the merchant. The king

sits upon his throne of jade and porphyry, his sceptre in his hands, his generals bringing him news of far victories, his courtiers whispering the words that kings feed upon. Thou waitest, O Time, for the king.

Gone are the generations that conquered and peopled the earth, raising cities in the plain and palaces by the river-side. Thou knowest where, O Time! Gone are the road-makers, the fathers of dynasties, the empire builders. Thou knowest where, O Time! And now we, too, must go. We fade as parched grass in the time of heat, as lambs that stray from the ewe, as dew-drops in the noon of the day. We depart silently upon a strange pilgrimage. We follow the sun across the western hills, and know not the place of our going. But thou, O Time, thou knowest! Thou knowest, who knew the place of our beginning, the place of our ending also.



MIRAGE

By Jean Starr Untermeyer

AS the great ship sped through the evening,
And the fire-ball of the sun swung in the arch of the skies,
A vision of you rose out of the foam, your vibrant hair blowing up into the sun.
You danced over the shining waters in great, exultant bounds,
And all the zest of conquering youth was in your up-flung gestures.
You shouted loving and mirthful commands—
And it seemed that I must leap from the prow,
And rush to you over the radiant sea!

THE IMMOVABLE ORB

By Myron Zobel

OSWALD stood in the door of his shop and yawned. Not openly in the face of the world, as you or I, but gracefully, æsthetically, sheltered by his silky, uncalled palm.

Business was dull. That is, the optical business was dull. The public eye, charmed by the spectacular dismemberment of Europe, had little time to think of ailing. Hence Oswald had leisure to yawn.

It had all been so sudden. A tiny slip of paper, a signature or two, and the store was his. Heavens! little had he dreamed that he was so soon to be launched on his business career. He, Oswald, an optician—a tester of eyes! It was preposterous. It puzzled his little cerebellum.

"What you need," Oswald's physician had counseled, "is a change and diversion." And what had he selected?—eye-testing! Scarcely a customary choice! However, Oswald was not customary. Far from it! He was Oswald. Then, of course, there was the family friend—he of the optical business. It was the usual story. With insidious arguments he had persuaded Oswald that his (the friend's) business was his (Oswald's) diversion. (Confound this English language!) What could be more diverting than to hold a lovely face between one's hands and look down boldly into its lustrous orbs, searching, beneath the subterfuge of science, for those sparks of amorosity which the elusive personality of our Oswald could not fail to engender in the twinklers of maid and matron? So quoth the friend.

Oswald wavered. Oswald fell. He drew a check on dad for the amount—

and so he stood expectantly in his shop door, his hand seeking vainly to repress the involuntary escapement from Nature's safety-valve. But a rude awakening was soon to shake every fiber of his frame.

Something was in the wind—literally. It wafted its way to his sensitive nostrils. It was—perfume; nay more, it was *L'effleur de Coty*. Oswald cherished *L'effleur de Coty*. His life was incomplete without it. *L'effleur de Coty* was to Oswald what sunshine is to a flower. To return . . . ! Oswald's mentality underwent a strain. Each of the thirteen hundred and ninety-four grams of his uncreased brain grew tense. The grizzled hairs on his gray matter stood upon end. The . . . Yes! yes! but the cause, the cause! The cause presently heaved into sight—a palpable, living, breathing, *L'effleur de Coty*-radiating customer. A female customer: *the* female customer: she of the sparkling orbs. The blood corpuscles jostled each other in a mad race through Oswald's lungs. (Which is another way of saying: "His breast heaved with suppressed emotion.")

"You do eye . . . ?" ventured the perfumed one.

"Yes, yes, we do eye-testing," interrupted the amorosity-engenderer. "Our optical parlor is right this way." This with a magnificent sweep of the hand toward the rear of the store. A moment later he was boldly leading his first victim to the testing cell.

"Please be seated."

The stratus of *L'effleur de Coty* descended.

Oswald drew up a chair and looked squarely into those crystalline depths.

What luster! What expression! What frankness! He placed his hand beneath the victim's chin and stroked the forehead—thoughtfully, medically, authoritatively. Yes, the friend was right. This was business! This was diversion!

"Look into my eyes!" he commanded.

The ebon lashes rose—and quivered. A wink! a wink! a delectable wink! He saw the left lash rise and fall, rise and fall, with deliberate and devilish precision. Ecstatic, he watched it; and ever, as the lid arose, the eye beneath it glistened forth at him with renewed and dazzling brilliance. Oh, that left one was a stunner! . . .

"Ahem!" Oswald coughed. "We

will proceed with the examination. Read the sixth row of letters on that card."

"A, O, L, C, S. . . ."

"Yes, yes, quite right!—quite right! Now glance for a moment at that little lamp to your left."

Courage, courage! The climax is at hand!

There was an instant of embarrassment, an instant in which a tinge of scorn, of defiance seemed to flit across the maiden's face, and then, hastily, recklessly, the right eye flashed away toward the lamp; but motionless, steadfast, secure, the glassy brilliance of the left eye stared into his own.



IN SEPARATION

By David Morton

DISTANCE and Time will have their boastful lie:

Yet are you near me in a thousand ways.

You are the beauty in this dreaming sky,

The soul behind these brooding Autumn days.

Wherever Beauty is I seek your face,

I find and follow you in all things fair,

Calling your name in many a hallowed place,

Hearing no answer—yet I feel you there.

Thus do I set at naught the lying years,

The wasted worlds between your life and mine;

Shedding old griefs, old ironies and fears,

My heart still drinks your beauty like mad wine.

Grey distance yawns; Time works his wrath of days;

Yet are you near me in strange lovely ways.



WHEN a woman marries a handsome man, she always discovers, soon or late, that there are not enough handsome men to go 'round.



A CONSERVATIVE is a man who has prospered under radicalism.

INSULT AND SUPER-INSULT

By Arkadyi Averchenko

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN BY JACOB WITTMER HARTMANN

STATION-MASTER MISHKIN, who was growing middle-aged and wheezy, called his stenographer, Ninochka Riadnova, into his office, and handing her two rough drafts of certain long and incomprehensible general orders, requested her to make fair copies on the typewriter.

As he handed her the papers, he looked at Ninochka intently, and, owing to the bright sunlight, for the first time really saw her. Such things often happen.

Before him stood a plump, well-rounded girl of medium stature... Her fair white face was placid, but in her eyes there were sparks of blue light. Mishkin came closer to her and said:

"You, yes... as I was saying... re-write these things. I am not burdening you?"

"Why, no!" answered Ninochka in surprise. "That's what I get my salary for."

"Just so... your salary. Yes, that's true, your salary... Doesn't your breast pain you from bending over the machine? It would really be too bad if—"

"No; I have no pain."

"I am so glad to know that! You aren't cold?"

"Why should I feel cold?"

"Your waist is so thin, so transparent... Why, right here your arm is peeping through. Lovely arms! Have you any muscle in your arms?"

"Let my arm alone!!"

"But my dear... Just one... little minute! Stand still... why are you going? Yes, as I was saying... arms... peeping through..."

"Let go my arm! It hurts!... How dare you?"

Ninochka Riadnova escaped from the trembling blue-veined hands of old Mishkin and ran into the outer office, where the other employees were busy at their desks. Her hair was dishevelled and her right arm hurt her dreadfully above the elbow.

"Scoundrel!" she exclaimed under her breath. "I shall never forgive you this!"

She placed the cover over her machine, put on her things, and, having left the office, stood on the sidewalk. She thought: "To whom shall I go?" Then she decided: "I'll go to a lawyer!"

II.

LAWYER YAZYCHNIKOFF received Ninochka in his best legal manner and listened to her attentively.

"What a scoundrel!" he exclaimed, once she had told her story. "And an old man, too! Now what do you want to do?"

"Couldn't we send him to Siberia?" asked Ninochka.

"Well, Siberia's rather... But we should, at any rate, force him to suffer for his crime."

"Yes, let him suffer for it!"

"Have you any witnesses?"

"I am the witness," said Ninochka.

"No, you are the plaintiff. But if you have no witnesses, perhaps there are traces of violence?"

"There are! He offered me shameful violence: he squeezed my arm! Here's the mark of it!"

Lawyer Yazychnikoff looked thoughtfully at Ninochka's swelling

bosom, and at her lovely lips and rosy cheeks, over one of which a tear was trickling.

"Show me your arm!" he said solemnly.

"It is right there, under the waist."

"You will have to take off the waist."

"But you're not a doctor, you're a lawyer," protested Ninochka.

"That doesn't matter. The functions of the doctor and lawyer are so closely related to each other that they often overlap considerably. You know what an alibi is?"

"No. I don't . . ."

"As I thought. In order that I may determine the presence of crime, I must first of all determine your alibi. Take off your waist."

Ninochka blushed a deep red and, sighing, awkwardly disengaged the little hooks and eyes and removed the waist from one shoulder. The lawyer assisted her. When her firm and rosy arm, with its dimple at the elbow appeared, he felt with his finger-tips the lovely spot outlined against the pink and white background of her shoulder.

"Raise your arm," he ordered.

"Don't touch me!" shouted Ninochka. "How dare you?"

Trembling, she snatched up the waist and began buttoning it.

"What are you annoyed at?" demanded the lawyer. "It was necessary for me to ascertain the presence of any grounds for action. . ."

"You are a scoundrel!" Ninochka shouted at him, and, banging the door, she ran out.

On the street she reflected:

"And why did I go to a lawyer?.. I should have gone to a doctor.

That's it; to a doctor. Let him be a witness to this disgusting insult!"

III.

DOCTOR DUBIAGO was a sedate and solid man. He gave a warm welcome to Ninochka, listened to her politely, expressed severe disapproval of the railway official and of the lawyer, and then said:

"Undress yourself!"

Ninochka removed her waist, but the doctor, waving his hand in a professional manner, said:

"Kindly undress entirely. . ."

"Why entirely?" exclaimed Ninochka. "He took me by the arm. And I'm showing you the arm."

The doctor looked at Ninochka's figure, at her milk-white shoulders, and waved his arms.

"It will nevertheless be necessary for you to undress. . . I must take a complete survey of your injuries. Permit me—I shall help you."

He bent down over Ninochka, staring at her with his near-sighted eyes. Ninochka's arm, in a sudden sweep, pushed his spectacles from his nose, so that he was deprived for some time of the faculty of taking surveys.

"Let me go! Heavens!... What scoundrels all men are!"

IV.

OUTSIDE the doctor's house, Ninochka shook with rage and indignation.

"So that's what they are—these benefactors of mankind! Men of intellect! . . . No, we must expose them, put them on public view in all their nakedness!... These pharisees... we must tear from them their mask of benevolence!"

Ninochka walked up and down the sidewalk. Finally, somewhat quieted, she made up her mind to call on Gromoff, a newspaper man, who enjoyed a considerable popularity and was generally celebrated as a fearless man, of incorruptible honesty, who unmasked hypocrites twice or thrice a week.

The journalist Gromoff at first received Ninochka somewhat coolly, but after hearing her story, he was moved by her trials.

"Ha!" he laughed bitterly. "Those are our best people, who have been called to cure the ills and lighten the burdens of suffering man! They are the bearers of the truth and the defenders of the wronged and oppressed! Their motto is righteousness! People whose thin veneer of culture is torn from them at the first slight contact

with life! Savages, down to the very bones!... Ha, ha! I know you!..."

"Must I take off my waist?" suddenly asked Ninochka.

"Waist? Why the waist? Well, after all, you might as well take it off. It might be rather interesting to look at these marks...hm...of culture."

When he saw Ninochka's bare arm and shoulder, he closed his eyes and shook his head.

"But what arms you have! The idea of exposing such instruments for the undoing of men! Cover them up. But no... stop... Suppose I should kiss this arm right here, just inside the elbow! Eh? You see there can be no possible harm in that, to you, and for me it will open up the possibility of an entirely new experience, which..."

Gromoff never realized this curious new experience. Ninochka categorically refused the kiss, dressed, and left the house.

Having reached home, she smiled through her tears: "Heavens! All men are such scoundrels and... such fools!"

V.

THAT evening Ninochka sat at home weeping.

Feeling that she must tell her troubles to some one, she changed her clothes and called on her neighbor in the boarding house, one Ikhnemovnoff, a student of the natural sciences.

Ikhnemovnoff was bent over his books day and night. When Ninochka came in, he raised his head from his book, shook his mane, and said:

"Here's Ninochka! If you'd like some tea, it's over there. Some cold cuts, too. Meanwhile Ikhnemovnoff will finish his chapter."

"I have been insulted today, Ikhnemovnoff,"—Ninochka informed him mournfully, as she sat down.

"Now, now! Who?"

"A lawyer, a doctor, an old man also. Such cowards!"

"How did they insult you?"

"One squeezed my arm and left a mark, and the other looked at it and touched..."

"Really," said Ikhnemovnoff, turning a leaf, "that's not nice."

"My arm hurts so," Ninochka wailed sadly.

"Such rascals! Have some tea."

"And I suppose," Ninochka smiled sorrowfully, "that you will want to look at it too... won't you?"

"Why should I look at it?" the student asked. "If there's a mark, I'll take your word for it."

Ninochka began drinking tea. Ikhnemovnoff turned the leaves of his book idly.

"The arm hurts even now," she vouchsafed, "perhaps some application or other would be good for it."

"I don't know."

"Perhaps I ought to show it to you. I know... you are not like the others... I trust you."

Ikhnemovnoff shrugged his shoulders.

"Why should you go to such trouble?... If I were a physician—I might be of help. But I am—a zoologist."

Ninochka pursed her lips.

"Please look!"

"If you wish... Hold out your arm... be calm, only lower the waist from the shoulder... That's it. This? Hm... Really, there *is* a mark. Such rascals, those men! But it will disappear very soon."

Ikhnemovnoff shook his head and returned to his chair.

Ninochka sat in silence, her head bent, and her bare shoulder shining faintly by the light of the wretched lamp.

"You ought to cover up the arm," Ikhnemovnoff resumed. "There's some black caviar on the table."

"He pinched my leg, too, under the knee!" said Ninochka, suddenly, after a long silence.

"Such a rascal!"

"See it?"

Ninochka pursed her lips and was about to raise her skirt, when the student interposed gently:

"There's no use doing that. You would have to take off your stocking, and just now there's a draught from the door. You will catch a cold,—never

mind! Heavens, if I only knew beans about medicine, as our people say. Have some tea!"

He again buried himself in his book. Ninotchka sighed and shook her head.

"I guess I'll be going. I think my talking is keeping you from your work."

"Not at all,—how can you say so?" protested Ikhnemovnoff, energetically shaking Ninotchka's extended hand.

Having returned to her room, Ninotchka threw herself on the bed, and, downcast, wailed yet again:

"What scoundrels all men are!"



TWO LITTLE LYRICS

By J. H. Thorne

I

WE wandered o'er the dawn-kissed hills,
In search of vagrant daffodils;
But, though with flowers the path was lined,
To their frail beauty I was blind.
I only saw your eyes.

II

I longed for Love. From out the mist,
With quivering wings of amethyst,
He came and to my window flew;
But, who he was I never knew
Until he went away.



WARNING

By H. Thompson Rich

COME to me not in sorrow:
Our love is built of laughter,
And of song.

Once I was sad,—
But I never told you!



THE SECRET OF THE SPHINX

By F. M. Spitz

MYSTIC, inscrutable, brooding, the Great Sphinx looks out over endless sands. His lips are calm and almost smiling, his quiet eyes muse passionless for aye; he has pierced to the secret at the heart of life. It is graven on the tablets of the ages that whoso reads the secret of the Sphinx has grasped the Ultimate. But the sages affirm that never yet has man arisen to read the riddle locked behind those lips of stone. The sages do not know. There was once a man who read the secret of the Sphinx.

It fell in time long past, when men sought wisdom eagerly, that there dwelt in the Isle of Cyprus the Wisest of All the Wise Men. The causes of all things he knew, with the last and least effect that flowed from each. Space held no mystery for him, save only the one Great Mystery, the final question behind all laws.

That he might know all things without exception he rose from beneath his willow and sought the Great Sphinx; for it is written that the Last Question only the Sphinx shall answer.

The Wisest of All the Wise Men reached the Sphinx in the rose and violet dawn. "Tell me your secret, O Sphinx!" he cried. "Behold, there is nothing beneath the sun that I do not know, of Things and the Seeming of Things. Yet behind Things lies the Secret, as It lies behind your brow. Tell me the secret, O Sphinx!" But the Sphinx only gazed over the desert, with eyes omniscient and lips that almost smiled.

The Wisest of All the Wise Men knew that in a true quest time does not enter. So he sat him down in a

corner of the temple that is between the Sphinx's paws, and ever he sought the secret of the stone.

The years rolled by. He was old until he could grow no older, yet seeing that his was a true quest Death held aloof. Morning, noon and night his cry rose ever: "Tell me the secret, O Sphinx!" And the Sphinx seemed to look on him with a kindlier gaze, as though centuries of comradeship had lit a spark of friendship in the stony heart.

One night the Wisest of all the Wise Men sat beneath a lambent moon upon the burnished sands. His lips moved softly, in the habit of a thousand years: "Tell me your secret, O Sphinx! What is behind the Seeming of Things?"

And the Sphinx spoke softly in the moonlight: "Faithful seeker, you shall know my secret. Ask what you will."

The heavens swam before the gaze of the Wise Man. His old lips stumbled in reverence as he spoke: "What is the secret of the Universe, O Sphinx?"

And the Sphinx answered calmly: "I do not know."

It was as though an icy hand had clutched the Wise Man at the heart. His ardent quest of centuries was vain. His voice came feebly: "At least, O Sphinx, tell me your own secret."

And the Sphinx answered him calmly: "I have revealed my secret. I have no secret to reveal." The Wisest of All the Wise Men groaned. "Be of good heart, O Seeker," comforted the Sphinx. "The quest has not been vain. At last you know the Secret of the Universe; you know what lies behind the Seeming of Things."

SOBRIÉTÉ

By Jacques Nayral

Nous étions une centaine de sportsmen — ou soi-disant tels — dans la salle des fêtes du Boxing-Football-Club pour entendre le docteur Braunschauen de la Faculté de Leipzig.

Le docteur Braunschauen est un apôtre. Il a entrepris à travers le monde une croisade contre le grand Fléau le fléau cent fois plus redoutable que la guerre, la peste et le choléra — assez haut gradés, pourtant, dans la hiérarchie des fléaux — celui auquel nous devons des fils épileptiques et tuberculeux, l'alcool, enfin, puisqu'il faut l'appeler par son nom.

Le docteur Braunschauen ne procède pas comme l'excellente mistress Carrie Nation, qui saccage les bars à coups de hache, et, après avoir terrifié tenanciers et consommateurs, leur accroche d'autorité sur la poitrine des souvenirs cruciformes, lesquels recèlent la vertu secrète, dit-elle, d'imposer pour le restant de leurs jours une sobriété d'ascète aux plus déterminés ivrognes. Les exploits de mistress Carrie Nation, encore qu'ils aient été célébrés par tous les journaux d'Amérique et d'Angleterre et que leur renommée ait passé les mers, n'ont jamais converti personne. Le docteur Braunschauen, homme de sens pratique et d'esprit pondéré, comme il sied à un docte "Herr Professor" d'une faculté allemande, emploie des moyens plus civilisés, si j'ose dire. Il confère et s'adresse de préférence aux sportsmen. Il voit en eux les hommes de l'avenir, ceux qui ont le souci raisonnable d'un parfait équilibre moral et physique, et il estime, avec une grande sagesse, qu'une cam-

pagne contre l'alcool doit trouver parmi eux ses meilleures recrues.

* * *

Ledocteur parle le français avec facilité, comme il parle toutes les langues. A peine, de temps en temps, allonge-t-il un ou deux swings à cette face blême, la syntaxe. Vieille et joyeuse habitude de sportsman.

Toutefois, le docteur étant très savant, on pourrait craindre que son éloquence ne devint rapidement monotone et fatigante. Il n'en est rien. Le docteur Braunschauen tient soigneusement en réserve, pour les servir au moment propice, quelques tournures pittoresques d'origine teutonne, et quelques plaisanteries d'outre-Rhin qui font de lui, par leur imprévu, un causeur spirituel et bien parisien. De plus, son redoutable accent tudesque martèle les mots, et donne à ses vitupérations un caractère de si sauvage énergie qu'on songe, en l'écoutant, à la hache de mistress Carrie Nation. Alors on frissonne, on courbe la tête sous le verbe tonitruant et horrifique, et on est convaincu.

Nous l'étions tous, à l'issue de la conférence. Hâtivement, on se quittait, en se confiant, dans une poignée de main rapide, des paroles approbatives: "Très bien. Parfait. Quelle profondeur, et quelle vérité!"

Et, les épaules hautes, le col du paletot relevé, le chapeau enfoncé sur les yeux, nous nous dispersions dans diverses rues pour nous engouffrer, honteux et furtifs, au fond des bars tentateurs. Le docteur Braunschauen aurait été flatté, s'il eût pu nous voir; notre rougeur et notre honte étaient pour lui un premier succès.

J'avais donné ma commande au garçon et je commençais à jeter de timides regards dans le café à peu près désert où j'avais abrité ma honte et mon repentir, quand j'aperçus qui? Ce vieux Caracas, qui fut presque une gloire de la boxe, mais que l'habitude de libations trop copieuses, hélas! fit rentrer dans l'obscurité.

Caracas s'avança, veule et dégingandé, et me tendit une main nonchalante.

— Vous en venez aussi? interrogea-t-il.

— Je ne sais pas d'où vous sortez, Caracas, répondis-je avec raideur, mais, pour moi, je viens d'écouter le docteur Braunschauen, qui nous a parlé de cet horrible poison, l'alcool. Vous auriez bien fait d'être là, Caracas. Vous auriez trouvé matière à d'utiles méditations.

— Justement, c'est de là que je viens, déclara Caracas avec simplicité.

Il en venait! Caracas avait assisté à une conférence antialcoolique! Celle-là était bonne, vraiment! Mais ma dignité et mes fortes convictions me défendaient de donner libre cours à mon hilarité.

— Eh bien! fis-je sévèrement j'espère que cela vous changera.

— Pensez-vous, dit Caracas. Un bavard! C'est pas encore celui-là qui me changera.

De mes lèvres irritées jaillit une exclamation méprisante.

A ce moment, le garçon reparut, brandissant un verre. Le sommelier l'accompagnait, les bras hérissés d'une nuée de bouteilles.

— Versez, pernod, pour Monsieur, annonça le garçon.

Je protestai avec virulence:

— Qu'est-ce que vous chantez? Un pernod, à moi, un pernod?

— Mais monsieur m'a commandé. . .

— Fichez-moi la paix! Je vous demande un quart Vichy et voilà que vous m'apportez un pernod? Vous êtes fou? Changez-moi ça au trot, ou je supprime le pourboire.

Cette menace, plus peut-être que ma protestation indignée, ferma la bouche

au garçon ahuri. Il s'appretait diligemment à emporter le pernod litigieux, quand Caracas intervint:

— Laissez donc ça; je le prendrai, moi.

Et il se mit tranquillement à confectonner une savante absinthe.

Je buvais sans joie le quart Vichy imposé à mon hypocrisie résignée par la présence de ce fâcheux. Une légitime rancune me commandait de troubler le plaisir qu'affichait Caracas à savourer "mon" absinthe.

— Caracas, lui dis-je, vos affreuses habitudes vous feront mourir.

— Et vous, répliqua-t-il, avec votre Vichy, vous croyez que vous ne claquerez jamais?

— Vous êtes un sot, Caracas, affirmai-je péremptoirement. Vous mourrez d'une façon ignoble, dans les tortures du *delirium tremens*.

— Ça ou autre chose, dit-il, insouciant.

— Et en attendant, continuai-je, vous vous dégradez. Comparez l'ignominie de votre existence à la dignité de vie des gens sobres.

Je me rengorgeai en prononçant ces dernières paroles. Mais Caracas riposta:

— Les gens sobres, ils me dégoutent.

— Vous pourriez être poli, Caracas?

— C'est pas pour vous, ce que j'en dis. Seulement, moi, M'sieu Jacques, je vas vous dire. Je suis une victime de la sobriété.

Une stupéfaction m'envahit.

— Vous, Caracas! Une victime de la sobriété?

— Oui, M'sieu; à preuve, écoutez bien. Vous vous rappelez que si je n'ai plus trouvé d'engagements, c'a été rapport à mon match avec Billy Crooks?

— Oui, vous avez été au-dessous de tout, ce jour-là.

— Parfaitement. Et voilà pourquoi: ce damné Billy, buvait, il buvait, que c'en était comme une éponge. Tous les soirs, il avait, sans rire, ses deux litres de whisky dans l'estomac. Moi, qui savais la chose, je ne m'étais pas gêné

du tout, naturellement. Je m'amène, en père Peinard, avec mon petit coup de sirop habituel, sûr de ne faire qu'une bouchée du Billy Crooks. Malheur comment qu'il avait fait, cet oiseau-là? Qui est-ce qui l'avait empêché de boire sa ration, ou bien avait-il avalé une tonne d'ammoniaque? J'en sais rien. Toujours est-il qu'il était d'aplomb et frais comme l'œil. Alors, n'est-ce pas,

un homme à jeun contre un qui a le petit coup de sirop. . . .

—Oui, je me rappelle: après trois coups de poing, il a fallu vous einporter sur une civière.

—Justement. Et depuis ça, vous comprenez, la sobriété. . . .

Et je compris, en effet, toute l'amertume de ce pauvre Caracas, victime de la sobriété . . . des autres.



THE KINGDOM OF THULE

By Donn Byrne

A LAND of dusk and many nightingales,
 Of crickets' busy clamor, where the dew
 Comes dropping from the upturned stars, whose blue
 Depths shimmer, and the night draws seven veils
 Of mystery across the hills and dales;
 The owls are silent in the woods; a mew
 Shrieks sea-ward; linnets murmur; and then through
 The land there comes a silence. Night prevails.

Three barren oaks upon a distant hill
 Show black against the primrose of the moon.
 The trees are all a-rustle, and a rill
 Sends down the glimm'ring dusk its ceaseless croon.
 But for the bats' quick flutter all is still,
 And day will come a century too soon.



AT the bottom of Puritanism one finds envy of the fellow who is having a better time in the world, and hence hatred of him. At the bottom of democracy one finds the same thing. This is why all Puritans are democrats and all democrats are Puritans.



NEVERTHELESS, if George Washington could have foreseen the chautauqua, it is very likely that he would have let Cornwallis go.

THE ILLUMINATED PLATFORM

By George Jean Nathan

DAWDLING at the window of a London club and gazing with bored mien upon the thoroughfare, lounged two English dandiprats—and behind them, upon the long davenport, another. An automobile was resting at the opposite curb. Presently and with a balmy languor, one of the Englishmen at the window adjusted his monocle, stared painstakingly at the car, nonchalantly abstracted the crystal and remarked: "Buick." After a sedative period, the second Englishman, feeling for his monocle, finding it and with equal deliberation inserting it in his eye, permitted his vision leisurely to appraise the motor and, having appraised it, withdrew his glass and remarked: "Mércedès." Another cataleptic interlude, rent only by the ticking of the clock upon the distant mantel, and the Englishman upon the davenport arose *adagio* and slowly drew his hat down upon his ears. The first Englishman permitted his eye to lift. "Going?" he inquired. The other nodded. "Cawn't stand this blarsted wrangling," he returned.

Wherewith, a notion of Alfred Sutro's comedy "The Two Virtues" which inaugurated Mr. E. H. Sothorn's tenancy of the Booth Theater. Well-mannered as a valet, unruffled as an Arrow collar and exciting as a girl with nose-glasses, the piece is at once typical of the stereotyped species of London sugar-pill which provides the Englishman with his evening's excuse for dressing and the American manager with his yearly excuse for mistaking a drawing-room set for a polite comedy. The play was an immitigable failure when presented about a year ago by

George Alexander in the St. James's Theater—despite the fact that it had not been written by Bernard Shaw. But, since the piece contained in its cast a character with a title, a tea-pot and tray of muffins, a line in which the hero says to a lady, after he has that-will-do'd the butler: "Forgive my correcting Baylis before you, but I am very forgetful," a couple of disparaging allusions to money, a reference to a Prince, a Count and an F. R. S., a sniffish statement by one of the lady characters that one of the other lady characters is of *bourgeois* origin, a charge by one of the men characters that one of the other men characters has acted "like a green-grocer" and similar component parts of what, on Broadway, is known as "swell stuff"—to say nothing of the substitution of the word *pension* for boarding-house—it was not altogether surprising that the piece should be forthwith snapped up by an American manager to enchant the native hoddys-doddies.

It has been claimed for the play that one of its merits lies in the circumstance that the author has not apologized sentimentally for his lady with a past, that he has permitted her rather to brave out her transgressions with a pretty unconcern. But where a greater sentimentality than in this very Sutro thing? The unsentimental writer is he who allows his heroine to apologize for her sins. The sentimental fellow, on the other hand, ever will realize that by keeping his heroine from apologizing, he will invest her with his audiences' melting sympathy, the sympathy always accorded an accused character who shuts up. Again, though true enough,

Sutro's Mrs. Guildford does not explain away her temptation in the usual terms of low lights, soft Chopin and scent of lilacs on the night air, she cannot, at that, resist the not untypical Sutro impulse to allude to herself somewhat pathetically and wistfully as a bit of seaweed. "Do you ever go to the seaside?" she asks of the hero, nose-napkin ready. "Then you may remember having seen—a bit of seaweed—thrown up on the beach? Well, that's me. Just a bit of—stranded—seaweed. But—though it's far away from the sea—and will never get back there—the sea standing for Society and the hall-marked woman," et cetera. . . . You recognize the melody.

The two virtues of which Mr. Sutro composes are our old comrades, chastity and charity. And the philosophy which Mr. Sutro visits upon them is our old bedfellow, Is-there-only-one-virtue-in-woman-One-that-is-paramount-and-its-name-is-chastity-I-thought-there-was-another-called-charity. It is staggering news that the play distils. Nor of the other éclair juices of the theater is there an undue drought. Thus, along about nine-forty-five, we find the heroine cinderellaing "I was brought up in the country, with a nurse—I was an only child—and no one seemed particularly to want me." And along about nine-forty-six, "I don't think my father disliked me, but he died very soon and my mother was by way of being very young and very fashionable, and I was a nuisance to her." And along about nine-forty-seven, "So I made friends with an old cobbler—a lame old cobbler—and I used to sit on the floor, sticking my thumb, in a queer barn-sort of place where he worked—I could get to it through our garden—and he'd tell me stories, etc., etc." And at nine-forty-seven-and-a-half, the hero *doloroso*: "You—were—a—lonely—child—Freda."

What a transpontine buncombe rests upon the world! The mere presence in such an overseas dramatic manuscript of the phrase "I dare say" in place of the American "you bettcha," of the

word "fortnight" for the American "coupla weeks," of "really" in place of "quit your kidding" is sufficient to confuse and englamour and enravish the eyeball of the native producer. And probably rightly and reasonably. But mere polish does not make a play. Nor does a tasty selection of language. The difficulty—to speak from the left teeth—with the American, as opposed to the British, playwright is not so much that he lacks the Briton's polish, polite grammatical sense and word skill as that he lacks the Briton's knowledge of the right times and places wherein to use them. In plays by American writers, accordingly, the heroes generally act and talk like butlers while the butlers act and talk like the kind of butlers Charles Klein used to make.

Nevertheless, it remains that the best sample of good British comedy on the New York stage at the moment of writing is an American comedy. To wit, Mr. Langdon Mitchell's "The New York Idea." The revival of this modish embroidery of wit accents once again the integrity of the contention that it is unreasonable and futile for us to expect polite comedies from the droll bar-brothers of Broadway: that it takes a gentleman to write a gentleman's play just as certainly as it takes a gentleman to fox hunt, read Max Beer-bohm or drink light wines. Some things, one must be born for. And nine-tenths of our American rabble-writers were assuredly not born into the estate of smart satiric composition. Sitting before "The New York Idea," one never forgets that one is in the presence of a writing fellow possessed of the Pullman attitude, of *savoir-vivre*, *savoir-faire*—of a fellow who, as a youngster, had a governess, went to a private school and looked, at his university, with amused tolerance upon such out-of-place louts as were working their way through college by waiting on table and the like—of a fellow who, as a man, belongs to smart clubs but of course never enters them, does not feel it necessary to return the bow of any person who chooses to bow

to him, would never dream of eating liver and does not wear hole-proof hose. Of one, in short, who has the instincts of a well-bred, educated, well-poised and altogether possible companion.

It takes such a soul to write a piece like "The New York Idea." Public school boys do not grow up to be the authors of satiric drawing-room comedy. It being drawing-room comedy alone with which we are here concerned—not other moulds of drama. Who but a man who at home knew the difference between filets de truite grillés à la Jeanne d'Arc and filets de truite grillés à la Sévigné could have written a "Gay Lord Quex"? Who but one able to insult ladies with charm and skill, an "Anatol"? Trig satire is born in a man, it isn't made. It is born in him just as clean fingernails, a preference for the most secluded table in a restaurant, an aversion to the sound of such words as "wart," a dislike for talking over the telephone and a taste for thin women are born in him.

An interesting element concerned with the revival of this genteel specimen of theatrical composition is the performance in it by Miss Grace George of the role of Cynthia Karlake, originally divulged by Mrs. Fiske. Interesting, I say, because, though from a strictly critical point of view Miss George's interpretation is inferior to Mrs. Fiske's, it is nonetheless a much better interpretation. Mrs. Fiske played the part accurately, reasonably, logically. She knew she was playing artificial satiric comedy and so played from first to last in the artificial satiric comedy spirit. And as a consequence of this sound and appropriate interpretation of the role, became exceedingly monotonous and tiresome ere the second of the four acts was done. Miss George, on the other hand, plays the part inaccurately, unreasonably, illogically. She forgets she is playing artificial satiric comedy and so plays it with small regard for the correct artificial satiric comedy spirit. Instead she injects periodically into her delineation of the role a perfectly inappropriate and erroneous sentiment and

serious dramatic note. And, though thus from a technical standpoint she presents an incorrect interpretation, she yet contrives, by the false variety which she gives her labours, to hold the attention of her audience where Mrs. Fiske lost it. Does this not once more clearly exhibit how inutile it is to regard acting as a thing seriously to be criticized? If Mrs. Fiske's performance was technically admirable and if Miss George's performance is technically full of holes and if Miss George's performance is therefore vastly the better of the two so far as the staging of the Langdon Mitchell manuscript is concerned—where was William Winter when the lights went out? Acting has only one reason-to-be and that, obviously, is to be effective upon a theatrical audience. One cannot stay at home and read acting as one can stay at home and read plays. Acting is mere trickery, like playing "The Rosary" on a resined string attached to an empty baking-powder can, or making the ace of hearts jump out of the deck, or writing such paradoxical, though perfectly sound, arguments as this. Acting is good acting in proportion to its effectiveness and it is not infrequently effective in proportion to its departure from the best critical standards for appraising it. Acting is good acting in proportion to its effect upon the average audience just as a play is a good play in proportion to its lack of effect upon the average audience. Miss George's is a wrongly conceived and hence brilliant performance. And, while we are at it, let's be entirely honest. Good performance or no good performance, you and I would anyway—either in or out of our professional capacity—as much prefer to watch Miss George's Cynthia Karlake to Mrs. Fiske's as we would Peggy Rush's to that of Sarah Bernhardt.

Just as in Mr. Herman Sheffauer's belated, credulous and soporific Jewish-Christian play "The Bargain," Miss Dorothy Donnelly's idea of interpreting the role of a Jewess was to act without

a corset, so would it seem in the Goddard-Dickey anthology, "Miss Information," to be Miss Elsie Janis' idea of versatility that versatility consists merely in doing a whole lot of perfectly irrelevant things. Just why jumping in and out of half a dozen costumes, achieving a somersault, singing a song and giving an imitation of Ethel Barrymore should be regarded as marks of virtuosity and versatility, I am somewhat unable to comprehend. I, for example, am believed by some persons (about whom I have written nice things) to be a dramatic critic. Now, if, during the reviewing of a play, I were suddenly to jump out of my seat and do a split in the aisle and while in this gay posture give an imitation of Dorothy Gish, would it indicate that I was versatile or would it simply indicate that I was a plain dampfool? A dramatic critic is a dramatic critic (at least cases have been known!); a plumber is a plumber; a beer-wagon driver is a beer-wagon driver. And a music-hall mimic is a music-hall mimic. One doesn't regard the plumber as a greater plumber if he can also drive a beer-wagon or the beer-wagon driver as a greater beer-wagon driver if he knows how to perform upon the bathroom. Nor do I quite see why one should regard a music-hall mimic as something greater than a music-hall mimic because in addition to her talent for good mimicry she possesses a talent for bad somersaulting. The truth about Elsie Janis is that she is a clever little vaudeville woman with an unquestionable knack for imitating the mannerisms of her fellow sniffers, face-makers and gesture-chefs and that beyond this she owns nothing of genuine versatility. What they otherwise call versatility in impersonation in Miss Janis is actually merely a faculty for changing costumes with rapidity. This confusion of versatility with costumes being a not uncommon practice of the reviewing mind. Miss Janis, true, can sing a bit and dance a bit, besides mimic; but she can neither sing nor dance so well as young women who have specialized in

singing or dancing, or both. The Elsie Janis versatility hallucination is, in short, a triumph of press-agent over newspaper reviewer's waste-basket.

Knowing something of the nature of the typical Broadway showmaker mind, it seems not improbable that the idea for the composition of Mr. George Broadhurst's latest bloom, "What Money Can't Buy," occurred to that gentleman after this fashion: "The public is getting sick of war plays and realistic plays and such sordid things and is unquestionably ready for romance; so I will write the public a romantic play." Which, truth to tell, was a very good idea—all that is, save the "I." For whatever the talents of this Mr. Broadhurst—and he frankly admits that he is in considerable measure a genius—it remains that he has not the talent for the writing of romantic comedy. In the first place, romantic comedy calls for imagination. In the second place, it demands a feeling for poetic expression, a talent for adjective, for simile, for the orchestration of words. In the third place, it calls for reticence. And these qualities Mr. Broadhurst—however bewitching his others—would appear not to command. The resulting impression of this gentleman's attempt at fanciful romance is, therefore, of a love affair in a Broadway restaurant.

Mr. Broadhurst describes his play as "another telling of an oft-told tale." It thus was evidently intended to be one of a series including "What Happened to Jones" (a retelling in part of Pinero's "Magistrate") and "Bought and Paid For" (a retelling in part of Brioux's "Maternity"). This latest play being a retelling of the Collected Works of George Barr McCutcheon, "Hawthorne of the U. S. A." and kindred dinguses. To the mythical kingdom in southeastern Europe proceeds, as per schedule, young hero. He being a hero by virtue of the following attributes: (1) American; (2) Yale; (3) sack suit; (4) slang; (5) and other similar bad manners. In the rose-garden, when

the purple gelatine slide as per schedule is slipped in front of the bunch-light, he tells the incognito Princess as per schedule that he loves her. But, says the Princess, a.p.s., it can—never—be. She is betrothed to the a.p.s. Little Mustache known as Prince Ferdinand and, besides, she is of royal blood. But, God bless me, wait! The hero's father, a millionaire and equally bad actor, will see the King and fix things up. The King, however, tells the hero's father that he is a mere commoner. Whereupon a.p.s. the hero's father retorts: "In my country, all men are commoners applause." The King, deeply impressed, thereupon invites the hero's father to drop in for lunch with the characteristically imperial* remark: "Be on time, as the Queen does not like to be kept waiting." And so on until the a.p.s. tongue-tickle of Yale vs. Princess at 11 P. M. A spoofish business. From first to last, not a trace of musical writing, of wit nor inventiveness, not the establishment of even a fleeting mood of dream dust and fancy. Indeed, so very mediocre in every respect is Mr. Broadhurst's latest work that he will doubtless a.p.s. forthwith begin to sauce the critics.

A poor play that is habitually threatening to be good, and never remains anything but poor, is the best estimate I can give you of Mr. Louis K. Ans-pacher's latest grand doings, "The Un-chastened Woman." But, though poor the play is, it yet contains one very nearly brilliant instance of character drawing in the person of its central female and at least one interesting and not unsubtle flash in the instance of her young woman companion. So clear and quick are these two appraisals that they have caused a sufficient confusion in several quarters to bring the play itself to be regarded as a composition of consequence. Still, this is a not unfamiliar occurrence. So saturated is the community with the sweetened syrups of the theater, its senses so benumbed by the theater's amber vapourings, that,

*Hotel.

suddenly confronted by an unsentimental play, however bad, it forthwith believes that play to be a good play. The thing is a simple, and obvious, study in sudden contrasts. After a series of "Peg o' My Hearts" and "Kitty Mackays" and such like honey breweries, the public is quite as certain to overestimate an antithetical, and equally inconsequent, piece of sourball dramaturgy like "Hindle Wakes" as it is to admire the acting of Mr. William Gillette merely because that gentleman speaks his lines in soft and tranquil tones when all the other actors in the company are made to deliver theirs *fortississimo, furiosamente*. It is the nature of the unsophisticated ever to be deluded, entranced, roped in by contrasts. Why, otherwise, does a man whose first wife was a brunette, always, when he marries a second time, succumb to a blonde? And vice versa? Why, otherwise, was "Rutherford and Son" acclaimed a noteworthy play? And why, otherwise, do persons with homes and home-cooking now and again relish a bad meal in a restaurant? The Ans-pacher masque is, in short, the sophomore's notion of a strong play.

The character which the author has maneuvered with so considerable an adroitness is a sort of light comedy reincarnation of the première hussy out of Bernstein's "Secret," a sort of tame vampire. The type is a familiar one—the married salamander, the lady who is willing to play football, but without goal posts. The story in which the playwright has placed this personage is a commonplace potpourri of young artist lover, indulgent husband and 11 P. M. worm-turn.

The performance by Miss Emily Stevens of the leading role in the Ans-pacher evening is excellently managed. It is, by all odds, the most thorough portrayal upon the season's platform.

It would seem that the new Winter Garden, Hippodrome and Century Music Hall shows have been manufactured upon the somewhat occult theory that whereas one vaudeville act is ad-

mittedly sufficient to drive a civilized man to drink water, a dozen vaudeville acts will, to the contrary, serenade and enrapture him. Vaudeville, as everyone knows, is designed frankly for that specimen of amusement-seeking zoophyte which is just below the species known as the Broadway first-nighter. True, it is difficult to imagine anything beneath the latter, but it appears something of the sort actually exists. The statistics show, indeed, that the creature thrives in large numbers. He is to be distinguished from the Broadway first-nighter in that he laughs himself half to death whenever a scaramouch alludes to the necessity of donning ear-muffs when eating watermelon, whereas the Broadway first-nighter surrenders only to paroxysms when the scaramouch alludes to the necessity of donning ear-muffs when eating blueberry pie. By effecting a deft compromise and substituting the joke about the rooster using fowl language, the purveyors of the several shows named have succeeded in attracting not only the Broadway playgoer but, by the sheer novelty, bravado and intrinsic jocosity of the coup, the vaudeville-goer as well.

The Winter Garden demonstration is called "A World of Pleasure." Beyond some beautiful scenery and costumes, the little Pritchard girl who is as out-of-place as a white carnation in the window of a Sixth Avenue florist, and an eloquent hoochee-coochee dancer christened Sahary Djeli, who, as her last name indicates, is an exceptionally fine quiverer, the evening resolves itself into an audience with sorry vaudeville roisterers who, when they are not cracking the ancient dirty joke about the Knight of the Bath, referring to a stout blonde lady as "you fat Swede" and making merry at the expense of the kippered herring, are in all seriousness reciting one of Robert Service's Yukon ballads, mistaking the name of the café proprietor at the bottom of the menu for a dessert, stating that they "belong to one of the first families of New York—as you enter the city" and, when one says to another that an uncle

of his was once a gentleman-in-waiting to the Queen of England, retorting "Oh, so your uncle was a waiter." What the Winter Garden needs—and needs badly—is a dialogue-writer who has manners, an immediate dose of C_6H_5OH for a performer named Mr. Jack Wilson, some stockings for its bare-kneed chorus girls and a stage director who, when he looks over the manuscript and observes that Venita Fitzhugh is directed to come out in a handsome frock, that Clifton Crawford is directed to point a gun at her and that, when the latter hesitates to fire, Stella Mayhew is directed to say, very wittily, "Go on, she's dressed to kill," will grab the gun and shoot everybody around the place. Otherwise the Winter Garden is destined to lose what claim it hitherto has had to the title of America's premier music hall.

The Century show is called "Town Topics" and contains a couple of million dollars' worth of everything but amusement. The Hippodrome show is called "Hip Hip Hooray" and is usual in every respect save for a graceful Admirals' Palace ice ballet. The Dillingham exhibit, which has inaugurated a new and successful régime at this institution, is not up to the opulent standard set by the Shuberts during their governorship. Of musical comedies, two: "The Princess Pat" with a typically agreeable and well-orchestrated score by the proficient Mr. Victor Herbert and an inept libretto by Mr. Henry Blossom, and "Alone At Last," with an ingratiating score by Herr Franz Lehar and the usual joke about the difficulty of seeing the sun in Pittsburgh, by Messrs. Edgar Smith and Joseph Herbert.

"The Mark of the Beast" is a sex play by two American ladies, the Mesdames Georgia Earle and Fanny Cannon, and hence twice as silly as if it had been written by but one. Like nine out of ten such domestic compositions, it commits the familiar mistake of viewing women as a problem instead of as an amusement. The play is so

solemnly serious that the authors would seem to have a fortune in store for them if they will wait until the war is over, translate it word for word and produce it in Paris as a farce. Consider the meat. A man's wife goes bacheloring. The man finds her out. He, adamant to her tears, determines at once to divorce her. Her counsel, a learned judge, seeks out the husband and, by the exercise of the celebrated "you neglected her for your business and a woman must have love" theorem, succeeds in persuading him to relent. This no sooner accomplished than the judge learns that his own wife has also been bacheloring and—oh my God how could she where is that revolver I'll kill the scoundrell! But Husband I. now into the breach. The baby-collar, blue-eyed philosophy once again to the bat, and Husband II., like Husband I. before him, falls. A profoundly impressive spectacle for all girls under eleven and over forty, and for all persons who use the double negative, believe it is unlucky to walk under a ladder, admire pianos with mandolin attachments, believe that fifteen drops of camphor in half a glass of water will prevent colds or think that kissing a girl in the ear is immoral. The stellar rôle in this trump is occupied by Mr. George Nash, one of the school of actors who, when the butler brings in a visitor's card, meditatively flicks it three times against his thumb before bidding the servant show the caller in. Miss Lenore Ulrich suggests possibilities in the sidereal female rôle; Miss Alma Belwin nethersoles the secondary female rôle; and Mr. George Howard is very much excited, indeed, for a man whose wife has deceived him only once.

Mr. Horace Annesley Vachell's London success, "Quinney's," is a sedulously amiable study in the obvious, a kind of Yorkshire "Way Down East." Studiously sweet as a poem in the *American Magazine*, the context of the piece is to be inferred from the nature of Susan Quinney's speech to her stubborn, snowstorm husband at 9:20 p. m.,

"If our Posy leaves, I leave with her!" And from Susan's postscript a moment later, "I've never been happy in this big house, Joe. I've longed again and again for our little cottage in York, etc., etc." The play discloses several well-written scenes and several nicely conceived thrusts at characterization, though the author's idea of an American appears to rest largely in the periodic ejaculation of a "Gee" and a "You bet your socks." The presenting company, brought over from London by Mr. Frederick Harrison, contains, among its male members, a number of excellent specimens for the Gallipoli campaign, and, among the ladies, a very lovely young person who, sitting in the fire-light with her lover and asked in soft and trembling tones, "Do you know what it'll be like, sweetheart, when you're mine?", responds with a "Yes" that contains all the ardour of a quart of Apollinaris. Beauty is a rare and wondrous thing; possession of it is frequently nine points in acting; technique, as was the phrase in "Cousin Lucy," is "very nil" against it; but tonsils in C major come, lackadaisy, something, one must admit, by way of litigation.

And so to the more musical tonsils of Miss Ethel Barrymore which mellow the flat and tuneless dramatization of the Edna Ferber "McChesney" stories. The latter job, done by the author in conjunction with Mr. George V. Hobart, has, truth to tell, been negotiated in weedy and candied manner. But Barrymore's is the voice in this wilderness. The lady can instil in me a feeling of pleasurable melancholy with some such line as "I like garlic on my roast beef" that cannot be equalled, aye even remotely approached, by Farrar singing "Butterfly."

An immeasurably better dramatization of the magazine fictions has been accomplished by Montague Glass and Roi Cooper Megrue in "Abe and Mawruss," a second edition of "Potash and Perlmutter." Here at once a genuinely amusing theatrical evening and an instructive study of the race of first-nighters in its lair.

A LITERARY BEHEMOTH

By H. L. Mencken

ON page 703 of Theodore Dreiser's new novel, "THE 'GENIUS'" (*Lane*), the gentleman described by the title, Eugene Tennyson Witla by name, is on his way to a Christian Scientist to apply for treatment for "his evil tendencies in regard to women." Remember the place: page 703. The reader, by this time, has hacked and gummed his way through 702 large pages of fine print: 97 long chapters: more than 300,000 words. The stagehands stand ready to yank down the curtain; messieurs of the orchestra, their minds fixed eagerly upon malt liquor, are up to their hips in the finale; the weary nurses are swabbing up the operating room; the learned surgeons are wiping their knives upon their pantaloons; the rev. clergy are swinging into the benediction; the inexorable embalmer waits in the ante-chamber with his unescapable syringe, his Mona Lisa smile. . . . And then, at this painfully hurried and impatient point, with the *coda* already under weigh and even the most somnolent reaching nervously for his goloshes, Dreiser halts the whole show to explain the origin, nature and inner meaning of Christian Science, and to make us privy to a lot of chatty stuff about Mrs. Althea Johns, the lady-like healer, and to supply us with detailed plans and specifications of the joint, lair or apartment-house in which this fair sorceress lives, works her miracles, trims her boobs, and has her being!

Believe me, I do not spoof. Turn to page 703 and see for yourself. There, while the fate of Witla waits and the bowels of patience are turned to water, we are instructed and tor-

tured with the following particulars about the house:

1. That it was "of conventional design."
2. That there was "a spacious areaway" between its two wings.
3. That these wings were "of cream-colored pressed brick."
4. That the entrance between them "was protected by a handsome wrought-iron door."
5. That to either side of this door was "an electric lamp support of handsome design."
6. That in each of these lamp supports there were "lovely cream-colored globes, shedding a soft lustre."
7. That "inside was the usual lobby."
8. That in the lobby was the usual elevator.
9. That in the elevator was the usual "uniformed negro elevator man."
10. That this negro elevator man (name not given) was "indifferent and impertinent."
11. That a telephone switchboard was also in the lobby.
12. That the building was seven stories in height.

Such is novel-writing as Dreiser understands it—a laborious and relentless meticulousness, an endless piling up of small details, an almost furious tracking down of ions, electrons and molecules. One is amazed and flabbergasted by the mole-like industry of the man, and no less by his lavish disregard for the ease and convenience of his readers. A Dreiser novel, at least of the later canon, cannot be read as other novels are read, *e. g.*, on a winter evening or a summer afternoon, between meal and meal, travelling from New York to Boston. It demands the attention for at least a week, and uses up the strength for at least a month. If, tackling "The 'Genius,'" one were to become engrossed in the fabulous manner described by the newspaper re-

viewers and so find oneself unable to put it down and go to bed before the end, one would get no sleep for three days and three nights. A man who can prove that he has read such a novel without medical assistance should be admitted to the *Landwehr* at once, without thesis or examination, and perhaps even given the order *pour la mérite*. A woman of equal attainments is tough enough to take in washing or to sing Brünnhilde. . . .

And yet, and yet—well, here comes the inevitable “and yet.” For all his long-windedness, for all his persistent refusal to get about his business, for all his mouthing of things so small that they seem to be nothings, this Dreiser is undoubtedly a literary artist of very respectable rank, and nothing proves it more certainly than this, the last, the longest and one is tempted to add the damndest of his novels. The thing is staggering, alarming, maddening—and yet one sticks to it. It is rambling, formless, chaotic — and yet there emerges out of it, in the end, a picture of almost blinding brilliancy, a panorama that will remain in the mind so long as memory lasts. Is it necessary to proceed against the reader in so barbarous a manner? Is there no way of impressing him short of wearing him out? Is there no route to his consciousness save laparotomy? God knows. But this, at all events, is plain: that no other route is open to Dreiser. He must do his work in his own manner, and his oafish clumsiness and crudeness are just as much a part of it as his amazing steadiness of vision, his easy management of gigantic operations, his superb sense of character. One is familiar with stylist-novelists, fellows who tickle with apt phrases, workers in psychological miniature, carvers of cameos. Here is one who works with a steam-shovel, his material being a county. Here is a wholesaler in general merchandise. Here, if such a fellow as Henry James be likened to a duellist, is the Hindenburg of the novel.

And what have we, precisely, in the

story of Eugene Tennyson Witla? A tale enormous and indescribable—the chronicle, not only of Witla's own life, but also of the lives of a dozen other persons, some of them of only the slightest influence upon him. And what sort of man is this Witla. In brief, an artist, but though he actually paints pictures and even makes a success of it, not the artist of conventional legend, not a moony fellow in a velvet coat. What the story of Witla shows us, in truth, is very much the same thing that the story of Frank Cowperwood, in “The Financier” and “The Titan,” showed us, to wit, the reaction of the artistic temperament against the unfavorable environment of this grand and glorious republic. If a Wagner or a Beethoven were born in the United States to-morrow it is highly improbable that he would express himself in the way that those men did; if a Raphael or a Cézanne, it is even more unlikely. The cause thereof is not that we disesteem music and painting, but that we esteem certain other arts infinitely more, particularly the art of creating vast industrial organisms, of bringing the scattered efforts of thousands of workers into order and coherence, of conjuring up huge forces out of spent and puny attractions and repulsions. Witla, as I have said, tries conventional art; he even goes to Paris and sets up as a genius of Montmartre. But his creative instinct and intelligence are soon challenged by larger opportunities; he is too thoroughly an American to waste himself upon pictures to hang upon walls. Instead he tackles jobs that better fit his race and time, and so, after a while, we see him at the head of a mammoth publishing house, with irons in half a dozen other fires—a boss American with all the capacity for splendor that goes with the species.

The chief apparent business of the story, indeed, is to show Witla's rise to this state of splendor, and its corrupting effect upon his soul. To this extent Dreiser plays the moralist: he, too, is an American, and cannot escape it altogether. Witla mounts the ladder

of riches rung by rung, and at each rise he yields more and more to the lavishness surrounding him. He acquires fast horses, objects of art, the physical comforts of a sultan. His wife, out of Wisconsin, is hung with fragile and costly draperies; his home is a thing for the decorator to boast about; his very office has something of the luxurious gaudiness of a bordello. Bit by bit he is conquered by this pervasive richness, this atmosphere of gorgeous ease. His appetite increases as dish follows dish upon the groaning table that fate has set for him; he acquires, by subtle stages, the tastes, the prejudices, the point of view of a man of wealth; his creative faculty, disdaining its old objects, concentrates itself upon the moulding and forcing of opportunities for greater and greater acquisitions. And so his highest success becomes his deepest degradation, and we see the marks of his disintegration multiply as he approaches it. He falls, indeed, almost as fast as he rises. It is a collapse worthy of melodrama. (Again the moral note!)

I say that this rise and fall make the chief business of the story, but that, of course, is only externally. Its inner drama presents a conflict between the two Witas—the artist who is trying to create something, however meretricious, however undeserving his effort, and the sentimentalist whose longing is to be loved, coddled, kept at ease. This conflict, of course, is at the bottom of the misery of all men who may be truly said to be conscious creatures—that is, of all men above the grade of car conductor, barber, waiter or Sunday-school superintendent. On the one hand there is the desire to exert power, to do something that has not been done before, to bend reluctant material to one's will, and on the other hand there is the desire for comfort, for well-being, for an easy life. This latter desire, nine times out of ten, perhaps actually always, is visualized by women. Women are the conservatives and conservators, the enemies of hazard and innovation, the compromisers and temporizers. That very capacity for

mothering which is their supreme gift is the greatest of all foes to masculine enterprise. Most men, alas, yield to it. In the common phrase, they marry and settle down—*i. e.*, they give up all notion of making the world over. This resignationism usually passes for happiness, but to the genuine artist it is quite impossible. He must go on sacrificing ease to aspiration and aspiration to ease, thus vacillating abominably and forever between his two irreconcilable desires. No such man is ever happy, not even in the moment of his highest achievement. Life, to him, must always be a muddled and a tragic business. The best he can hope for is a makeshift and false sort of contentment.

This is what Eugene Tennyson Witla comes to in the end. Women have been the curse of his life, from the days of his nonage onward. Forced into their arms constantly by an irresistible impulse, an unquenchable yearning for their facile caresses, he has been turned aside as constantly from his higher goals and led into smoother and broader paths. Good, bad and indifferent, they have all done him harm. His own wife, clinging to him pathetically through good and evil report, always ready to take him back after one of his innumerable runnings amuck, is perhaps his greatest enemy among them. She is always ten yards behind him, hanging on to his coat-tails, trying to drag him back. She is fearful when he needs daring, stupid when he needs stimulation, virtuously wifely when the thing he craves is wild adventure. But the rest all fail him, too. Seeking for joy he finds only bitterness. It is the gradual slowing down of the machine, mental and physical, that finally brings him release. Slipping into the middle forties he begins to turn, almost imperceptibly at first, from the follies of his early manhood. When we part from him at last he seems to have found what he has been so long seeking in his little daughter. The lover has merged into the father.

It is upon this tale, so simple in its

main outlines, that Dreiser spills more than 300,000 long and short words, most of them commonplace, many of them improperly used. His writing, which in "The Titan" gave promise of rising to distinction and even to something resembling beauty, is here a mere dogged piling up of nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, pronouns and particles, and as devoid of æsthetic quality as an article in the *Nation*. I often wonder if he gets anything properly describable as pleasure out of his writing—that is, out of the actual act of composition. To the man who deals in phrases, who gropes for the perfect word, who puts the way of saying it above the thing actually said, there is in writing the constant joy of sudden discovery, of happy accident. But what joy can there be in rolling up sentences that have no more life or beauty in them, intrinsically, than so many election bulletins? Where is the thrill in the manufacture of such a paragraph as that I have referred to above, in which the apartment-house infested by Mrs. Althea Johns is described as particularly as if it were being offered for sale? Or in the laborious breeding of such guff as this, from Book I, Chapter IV:

The city of Chicago—who shall portray it! This vast ruck of life that had sprung suddenly into existence upon the dank marshes of a lake shore.

But why protest and repine? Dreiser writes in this banal fashion, I dessay, because God hath made him so, and a man is too old, at my time of life, to begin criticizing the Creator. But all the same it may do no harm to point out, quite academically, that a greater regard for fairness of phrase and epithet would be as a flow of Pilsner to the weary reader in his journey across the vast deserts, steppes and pampas of the Dreiserian fable. Myself no voluptuary of letters, searching fantodishly for the rare tit-bit, the succulent morsel, I have yet enough sensitiveness to style to suffer damnably when all style is absent. And so with form. The

well-made novel is as irritating as the well-made play—but let it at least have a beginning, a middle and an end! Such a confection as "The 'Genius'" is as shapeless as a Philadelphia pie-woman. It billows and rolls and bulges out like a cloud of smoke, and its internal organization is as vague. There are episodes that, with a few chapters added, would make very respectable novels. There are chapters that need but a touch or two to be excellent short stories. The thing rambles, staggers, fumbles, trips, wobbles, straggles, strays, heaves, pitches, reels, totters, wavers. More than once it seems to be foundering, in both the equine and the maritime senses. The author forgets it, goes out to get a drink, comes back to find it smothering. One has heard of the tree so tall that it took two men to see to the top of it. Here is a novel so huge that a whole shift of critics is needed to read it. Did I myself do it all alone? By no means. I read only the first and last paragraphs of each chapter. The rest I farmed out to my wife and children, to my cousin Ferd, and to my pastor and my beer man.

Nathless, as I have before remarked, the composition hath merit. The people in it have the foggiest and impenetrability of reality; they stand before us in three dimensions; their sufferings at the hands of fate are genuinely poignant. Of the situations it is sufficient to say that they do not seem like "situations" at all: they unroll aimlessly, artlessly, inevitably, like actual happenings. A weakness lies in the background: New York is vastly less interesting than Chicago. At all events, it is vastly less interesting to Dreiser, and so he cannot make it as interesting to the reader. And no wonder. Chicago is the epitome of the United States, of the New World, of youth. It shows all the passion for beauty, the high striving, the infinite curiosity, the unashamed hoggishness, the purple romance, the gorgeous lack of humor of twenty-one. Save for San Francisco, it is the only American city that has inspired a first-rate novel in twenty-

five years. Dreiser's best books, "Sister Carrie," "Jennie Gerhardt" and "The Titan," deal with it. His worst, "The Financier," is a gallant but hopeless effort to dramatize Philadelphia—a superb subject for a satirist, but not for a novelist. In "The 'Genius'" he makes the costly blunder of bringing Witla from Chicago to New York. It would have been a better story, I venture, if that emigration had been left out of it. . . .

After getting down so vast a fiction, I was in no condition to give serious attention to more, and so what I have to tell you of the other novels of the month must be fragmentary and cautious. "GOD'S MAN," by George Bronson-Howard (*Bobbs-Merrill*), is another colossus—nearly 500 pages! I am laying it aside to read during the winter, and shall report on it later on. So with Willa S. Cather's "THE SONG OF THE LARK" (*Houghton-Mifflin*), Frank Danby's "THE STORY BEHIND THE VERDICT" (*Dodd-Mead*), Mary Johnston's "THE FORTUNES OF GARIN" (*Houghton-Mifflin*), Ethel Sidgwick's "DUKE JONES" (*Small-Maynard*), and Jack London's "THE STAR ROVER" (*Macmillan*). I have a good deal of respect for all of these authors, particularly for Mr. London and Miss Cather, and, God willing, I shall find out what they have to say in the tomes mentioned. But of Eden Phillpotts' "OLD DELABOLE" (*Macmillan*) you will hear no more from me, for I am quite unable to read Phillpotts and have baffled all efforts to teach me the art. Nor shall I return to "SPRAGGE'S CANYON," by Horace Annesley Vachell (*Doran*): one chapter has given me enough. Nor to—but get a copy of the *New York Times* and make out a list of department store "Ivanhoes" and "Vanity Fairs" for yourself. As I grow older such stuff grows increasingly tedious. There was a time when I could read it with amusement if not with profit, but now it merely irritates and exasperates me, and if I force myself to read it I soon find myself taking too much alcohol, nicotine, caffeine,

glycyrrhizine and other such dopes. . . .

No doubt Maxim Gorky's "MY CHILDHOOD" (*Century*) will inspire the newspaper moralists to homilies upon the lamentable ignorance and viciousness of the Russian little *bourgeoisie*. We have here, remember, not a picture of peasant life, but one of town life. Nijni Novgorod, in which Gorky grew up, is a city of almost 100,000 population, and the scene of an annual fair which attracts 500,000 visitors. Gorky *père* (or, more accurately, Pyeshkov, for that is the family name) was a carpenter by trade and the son of a cashiered officer. The maternal grandfather of the author, in whose house his childhood was spent, was a small manufacturer of dyes, and apparently in comfortable circumstances. His stepfather would appear to have been some sort of civil engineer. In brief, the family was anything but poor, and some of its members held their heads pretty high. And yet, as Gorky describes the circle of relatives, neighbors and acquaintances, we see all sorts of stupidity, brutality, laziness and superstition. The grandfather beats the boy unmercifully; the grandmother believes in demoniacal possession, tipples *vodka* and pilfers the boy's earnings; the uncles are frank thieves and ruffians; most of the neighbors are quite as bad; a few are much worse.

But is all this peculiar to Russia? Have we here a picture of a state of degradation that cannot be matched elsewhere, say in this grand republic? I doubt it. On the contrary, I am firmly convinced that our own petty *bourgeoisie*, despite the great boons conferred by the constitution, differs no more from that of Russia—or from that of England or France or Germany or Italy—than a flea differs from a louse. It, too, is ignorant and emotional. It, too, is gross in its habits and infantile in its credulities. It, too, is torn forever between hoggish appetites and savage fears and taboos. The only difference lies in the fact that Russian literature is marked by a remorseless, almost fanatical realism,

whereas our own is marked by an equally exaggerated romanticism. Such a thing as an absolutely true picture of family life in a small American town doesn't exist. What we have is merely a series of sentimentalized water-colors, with all of the brutality, avarice, adultery, dishonesty, dirtiness, villainy and smallness of soul left out. The Anglo-Saxon is too squeamish to bear the naked reality. Such stuff as you will find in Gorky's "Nachtasyl" or Hauptmann's "Die Weber" or Zola's Rougon-Macquart series is too stiff a dose for him. He would jail the fellow who tried to administer it.

One quickly discovers the truth of this whenever an attempt at an attempt is made. A couple of years ago, for example, I procured the publication of a book called "One Man," the autobiography of a typical American Puritan, the story of his endless oscillation between Puritan carnality and Puritan asceticism. The manuscript had come to me unsolicited and I had been at once struck by the hard truthfulness of it, the evident desire of the author to depict himself as he really was. Here and there he actually went too far; living persons were obviously compromised; I suggested various emendations in the interest of the public peace. But what remained was a piece of writing of truly astounding vividness, and I confidently expected that it would be recognized at once, and perhaps start off a new school of realists. But what it actually encountered from the critical fraternity was a storm of protests, not against the form of it or the style of it, but against the honesty of it! In other words, the author was dismissed out of hand because he was the first American author in history to make a sincere effort to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. . . .

No wonder such a scrivener as James Huneker goes abroad for his adventures. His last volume, "IVORY, APES AND PEACOCKS" (*Scribner*), bears an Old Testament name, and is filled with

praises of gentlemen who are as wholly unknown in the United States as Theodor Schwann or Johannes Müller. To talk of Jules Laforgue, Arthur Rimbaud, Pierre d'Alheim, Alfred Kubin, Edvard Munch and Modeste Moussorgsky is to drop Sandy Hook astern; not only these men as individuals but even the very classes and categories of men to which they belong must needs seem strange and fantastic to the patriotic American. We are a nation without a single first-rate contrapuntist, and with no more than a thousand citizens who could tell a first-rate one from a third-rate one. The only American symphony that has anything approaching a permanent place on concert programs, even in America, was written by a Bohemian who couldn't speak a word of English. No president of the United States, so far as there is a record, has ever heard Beethoven's Fifth. . . . But perhaps I here do an injustice to Woodrow, who sang in the glee club when he was at college. . . . And, in any case, I no doubt grow tedious, for I have discoursed on the æsthetic spirit in America full oft before.

In the new Huneker book I have been most interested in the chapters on music, for that is the art that gives me more pleasure than any other—aye, than all others put together. I would not exchange the nine symphonies of old Ludwig, even in piano score, for all the pictures in the Louvre or all the carved marble in Rome. And the Luxembourg? I offer you two Haydn quartettes and a Strauss waltz for it—and grossly overpay you. My keenest æsthetic memories of Paris—setting aside the gustatory sort—are not of the loot that Napoleon I. brought home, but of a performance of Beethoven's First Symphony by the Touche Chamber Orchestra in the Boulevard Strasbourg, back in 1908, and of the first night of Richard Strauss' "The Legend of Joseph," just before the war. (What would the French do to Strauss if he popped up in Paris now? Think of what they did to his eminent compa-

triot, Appenrodt, the estimable Herr Wirt of the Boulevard des Capucins!) For this first night seats were selling at eighty francs, and even so the house could not hold the crowd. Huneker, in Stuttgart, was taxed fifty marks for a seat at the *répétition-général* of "Ariadne at Naxos." His tears run all the way down page 162, collecting in a sad little pool at the bottom.

What he says of Strauss is forthright and accurate: "he is the foremost of living composers." The debate over him that raged a dozen years ago now seems almost as fabulous as the row over Wagner, or the even more astounding one over Brahms. Strauss' nearest rival is miles behind him; he can do anything that any other living composer can do, and a lot of things that none can do. His ingenuity is endless; he writes with superb fluency and style; his mastery of the orchestra is quite incomparable. The most trivial piece of music, orchestrated by Strauss, would become immensely interesting. Why doesn't he try his hand at the re-instrumentation of some of the classics, particularly the symphonies of Schumann? Imagine the finale of the D minor in all the gorgeous colors of the Strauss orchestral palate! Or the opening of the B flat or the whole of the Rhenish! Again, there is Schubert's C major. And But what I started out to say was that Huneker is in his old form in "Ivory, Apes and Peacocks," that it is amusing and instructive, that it is of sound criticism all compact.

Which brings us, at the end, to Dr.

William Lyon Phelps' "BROWNING: How to KNOW HIM" (Bobbs-Merrill). Dr. Phelps is an able and a persuasive critic, and he here performs earnestly and *con amore*, but the net impression I get from his book is that of a man trying to revive a clothing store dummy with a pulmotor. Is Browning still a living poet, a genuine force in literature? With the utmost good-will, I can only doubt it. In the Browning societies, yes. In the universities, perhaps. But elsewhere, he is dead, embalmed, buried. Even the hub-bub that he raised has been forgotten, like the hub-bub that raged around Mendelssohn. I have seen no mention of him in *Punch* for ten years. . . . The cause? It seems to me to be as plain as day. The trouble with Browning, as a poet, was that he could not reach and arouse the emotions, that he put everything into poetry save passion. I do not here echo the old, hollow charge that he did not write poetry at all; I merely say that he wrote poetry which was bloodless, cold, inert. He and Pope, though apparently as far apart as the poles, were really brothers under their skins. Each sought to make beauty attractive by arguing for it; each managed to convince without moving. Dr. Phelps quotes an undergraduate as saying: "Tennyson soothes our senses; Browning stimulates our thoughts." Aha, but don't forget that the soothing of the senses is the first and last aim of poetry, that save as it be music and sweet and full of thrills it is no more poetry than I am an archdeacon. Browning the poet: Czerny the musician. . . .



Next Month's Smart Set Novelette:

"THE MISSPENT YOUTH OF MAX TRELAWNEY"

By FRANK R. ADAMS

The Very Best Work of one of the Best of the
Smart Set Authors



In the Shops of the Smart Set

By Jeanne Judson

If you are interested in advance information, not only about the mode, but about things novel, dainty and useful, to be found in New York's



best shops, you will read the following pages with pleasure and profit. We will be glad to tell you where any of these articles can be found, or we will purchase them for you if you desire. Simply address your inquiry to "In the Shops of the Smart Set," 331 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

IF you are tired of wearing mere silk and velvet and wool and cotton, if you are filled with ennui at the sight of the wonderful fabrics with which the shops abound, you can dress in kid. Suits and coats of soft, pliable kid in various colors have made their appearance in many of the New York shops. A suit of purple kid trimmed with black lynx fur is an alluring combination.

If you are smart you will carry a fur-trimmed umbrella with tortoise shell handle, to protect you from the early snow, and with it will be a leather bag trimmed with tortoise shell.

Perhaps you will not care for an entire suit or dress of kid, but will content yourself with using this new material merely as a trimming. It is very effective in shades of purple, yellow, blue and pink. You can also buy hats of kid.

The coat illustrated on page 160 is of blue leather, trimmed with kolinski and dull metal buttons. The price is \$95.00. This is being shown at an upper Fifth Avenue shop, where also

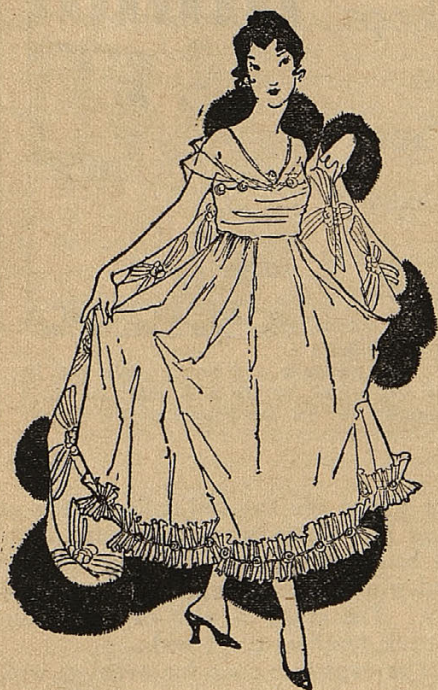
are shown the hat and collar shown on page 160. The hat is a Reboux model of black velvet with a band of black and white ostrich combined with skunk fur. The collar is also of skunk and ostrich feathers combined.

The cape-like coat for evening wear shown on the figure on page 158 is of flowered tapestry threaded with gold. It is lined with pink silk, the flowers on

the tapestry design being of a deeper pink. The collar, cuffs and banding are of seal and it fastens with large seal-covered buttons.

The gown shown on this same figure is a Callot dance frock. It is of white satin and is made with the umbrella skirt, a development of the still popular panieres, but extending all around the skirt in modified form instead of having most of the draping and fullness at the back. The bodice is of silver cloth and chiffon. There is a large bow of white net at the back, with long, wide streamers. A wreath of pink roses outlines the shoulders, and a fringe of chif-





fon rose ruching with the same pink flowers finishes the bottom of the skirt. This gown was found at a shop at Forty-seventh Street and Fifth Avenue.

The coat shown in the illustration on page 157 was seen in this same shop. It is of dark green velour cloth, with skirts widely flaring from a yoke. The high collar and muff cuffs are of natural raccoon.

An interesting coat suitable for motoring is of black faille silk lined with gray suède cloth. It is long, in a semi-Cossack style, with a belt of the material fastened by round, large brass rings. Cuffs and pockets are of the gray suède cloth and the cuffs are fastened with links in the form of military-looking brass buttons. The collar can be worn either low or high.

A smart coat for street wear is of black velvet, short, full and almost round with cuffs, collar and pockets of beaver fur. It is just a step from this coat to the smart capelets of rich fur which will be a not infrequent substitute for the old-fashioned stole or scarf.

The gown illustrated on page 159 is a

charming combination of silver and blue. The actual skirt of this evening gown is comparatively narrow, the fashionable fullness all coming in the coat-like overdress, which is three-quarters length, very full and edged with blue-gray fox fur. The under dress is of silver cloth, the over coat, which hangs open at the front, is of silver and blue tapestry. A band of silver braid outlines the low bodice and another band of silver braid runs around the center of the skirt. A wide silver girdle belt is fastened in front with a buckle of silver and sapphires and two narrow strips of silver hang over each shoulder, weighted at the ends by similar smaller buckles.

At a model gown shop on Broadway at Forty-sixth Street, noted for smart styles and moderate prices, I saw a suit of gray broadcloth, made with a box coat, embroidered in silver with dull silver buttons. The collar was of astrachan. This suit is only \$110.00. Another suit in this same shop is of midnight blue satin. The coat has a shirred belt. The collar is of gray squirrel, and squirrel fur edges the cuffs and the bottom of the full skirt. This suit is \$89.00.

One of New York's most famous skin specialists has just opened a new salon at 673 Fifth Avenue. New salons are not unusual events in New York, but this particular one has caused much comment, because in every detail of furnishing and arrangement it so perfectly expresses the object for which it was designed. It is a real shrine of beauty, from the beautiful rugs and soft-tinted walls, to the exquisite old Italian chairs in the large, sunny reception room. It expresses the new, natural beauty of which its presiding spirit is an advocate.

From the reception room, private treatment rooms open, each one large and light and suggesting the privacy of a lady's boudoir.

The Venetian Salon D'Oro is well worth going to see. One cannot enter it without absorbing something of its ideals of beauty.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

People who love to give and receive that most beautiful of all gifts, flowers, will be glad to avail themselves of the recently established National Floral Corporation. This is a string of flower stores in all the principal cities of the United States. If you live in New York you can order flowers, choosing exactly the variety, quantity and quality you prefer, give the address of the recipient, who lives perhaps in Boston, Philadelphia, Denver or San Francisco, and an exact duplicate of the flowers you ordered will be delivered the same day from the local National flower store. The result of these stores will be that flowers will be a much more important factor in Christmas giving this year than ever before.

CHILDREN'S TOYS

People who have never bought toys for children imagine that this is very easy with the shops full to overflowing. But the truth is that after several seasons of Santa Claus it seems as if the little ones have everything that children could wish and there seems nothing left to buy. They must have something different.

The odd thing is that these "different" toys are usually much simpler and less expensive than the ordinary things one buys. For example, a jumping rope of heavy cord with handles, in a box with an appropriate verse, costs 35c. Bean bags of white kid, cut out like a child's figure, filled with beans—a safe ball for the younger children—cost only 50c.

Then there is the "Grow up" stick, 60 inches long, made to hang on the wall, with a place to mark the height, weight and age of the child from month to month or year to year. On the reverse side of the stick a popular fairy story is told in bright-colored pictures. The price of this toy, which is really as much for the mother as for the child, is \$5.00.

Of course the shops are already beginning to fill with Christmas novelties, if not with early shoppers. Most

of these are for children, as they should be, for Christmas is more than ever the festival of children, since common-sense people have put something of a check on extravagant giving among the grown-ups. However, one need not be extravagant to give very charming gifts. In one shop I saw a Chinese book mark, made first of a paper knife of bone-ivory, then a long silk cord on to which were strung large Chinese beads, and a finish of heavy tassels. This costs \$3.00 and is unusual enough to make it very attractive.

An inexpensive gift for a man is a German silver cigarette case, with a convenient "take one" holder inside, which sells for only \$5.00. It holds ten cigarettes.

A door holder in the form of an iron flower basket, the basket painted black and white and the flowers natural colors, costs \$3.50.

A set of Sultan-finish metal ash trays in a nest containing five trays costs \$3.00. Sultan-finish metal is much like bronze. The outer tray is trimmed with sterling silver.





These trays can be also purchased in a green bronze finish, \$3.00 for the silver-trimmed set and \$2.00 for a set without silver trimming. Another smoker's novelty is a Chinese box for cigarettes. On top of the box is a white metal stork. Press a

spring and the top of the box flies open and the stork bends over with open beak and picks up the desired cigarette. The price of this novelty is \$5.00.

MILADY'S FURS

Never before have there been presented to the public so many different varieties of "manufactured" furs. Never in recent years have furs been so expensive, yet never have so many really good furs been shown, and never have they been so eagerly purchased. The more fur the better this winter. Fur coats, fur hats, fur muffs (no larger than the cuffs of the coat with which they are worn), fur-trimmed shoes, gloves and veils.

While there are hundreds of new furs and fur fabrics, the valuable furs are most favored for coats. A prominent furrier on Fifth Avenue shows a three-quarter length coat of seal. The collar, wide cuffs and edging of the coat are of beaver. The combination of these two rich furs is decidedly beautiful.



The coat is made with a rather close-fitting natural-length waist, the collar is very high. The skirt is flaring and comes down to a point in front. It is shorter at the sides and long again in the back, brought down with a square-cut panel.

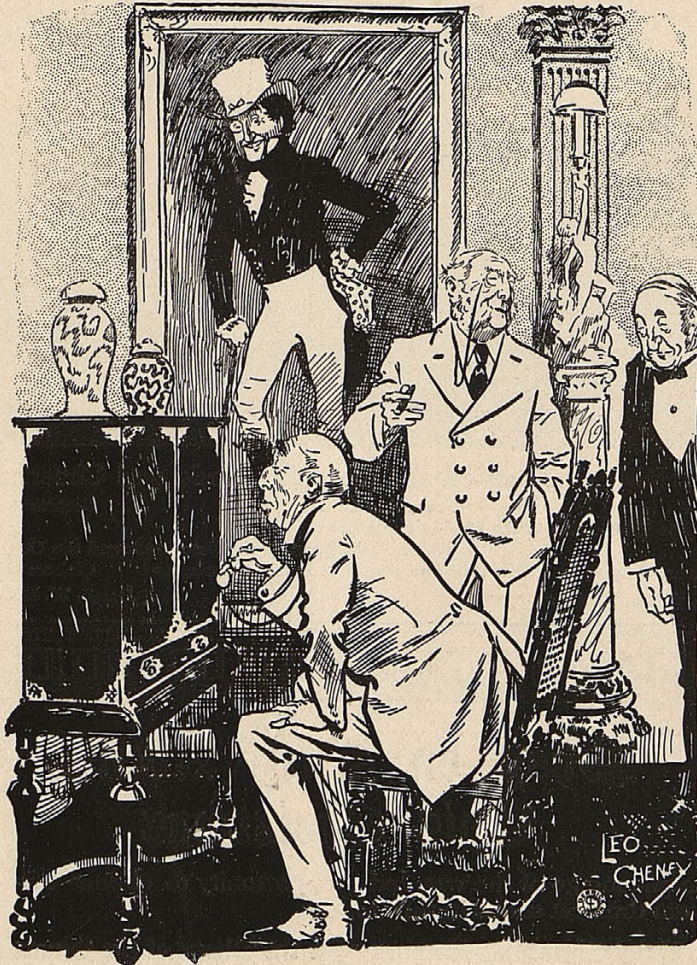
IN THE BLOUSE SHOP

Those who fear the absolute supremacy of the tailored blouse will be pleased to see that the smartest of all New York's waist shops, on Forty-second Street, near Fifth Avenue, is showing, in addition to their many tailored models, some really fluffy-ruffle blouses. One of these, selling for \$10.00, is of crêpe de chine, covered with net, and trimmed with rather large pink silk roses under the net. The effect of the color softened by the net is very attractive. It may be had in a number of colors, tan and violet being the most effective. With all its fluffiness, the sleeves of this blouse are long and the collar is high.

One thing certain, the plain white blouse is a thing of the past. Even blouses that are not made of silk will have collars and cuffs or ties of contrasting colors. Most of them are trimmed with a large pearl button.

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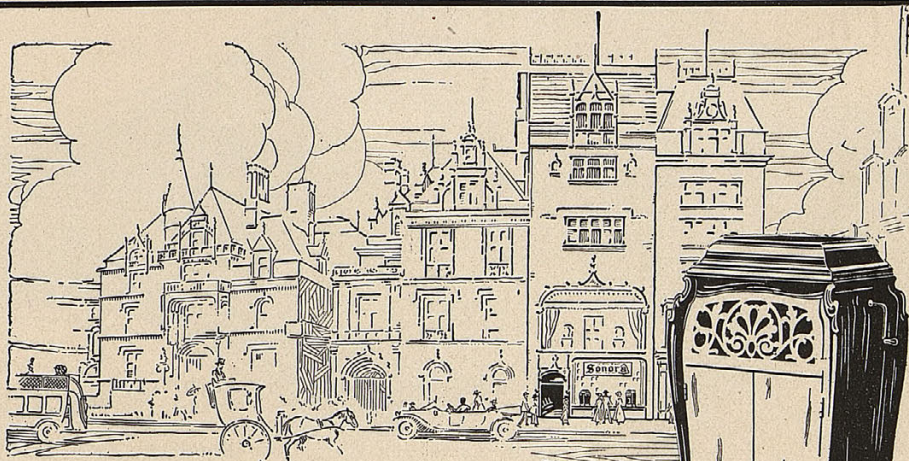
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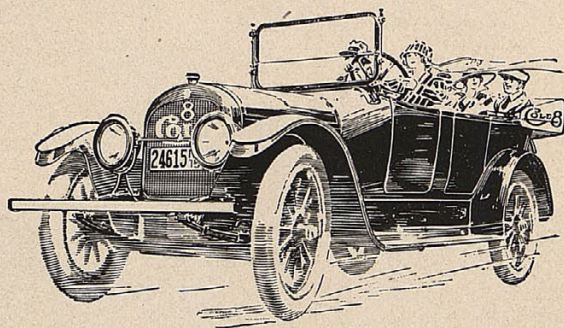
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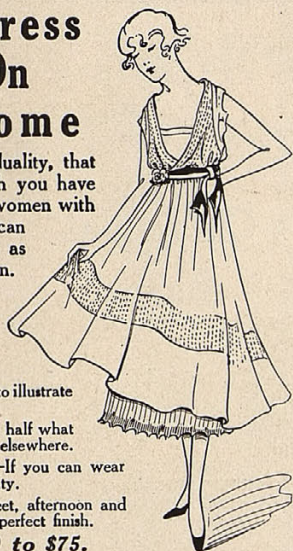
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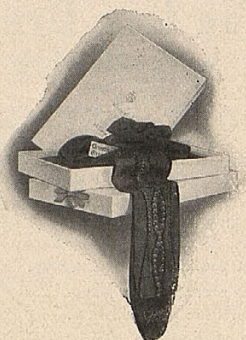
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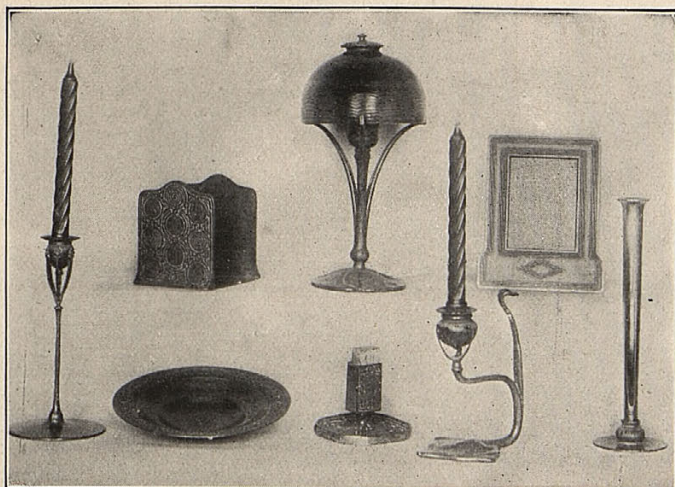
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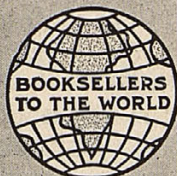
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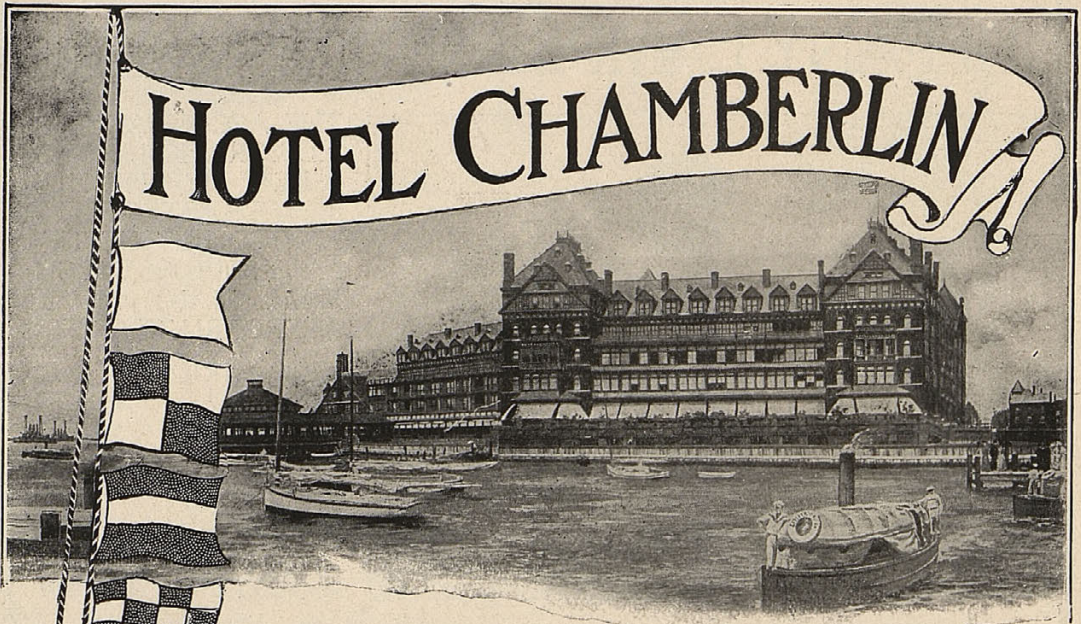
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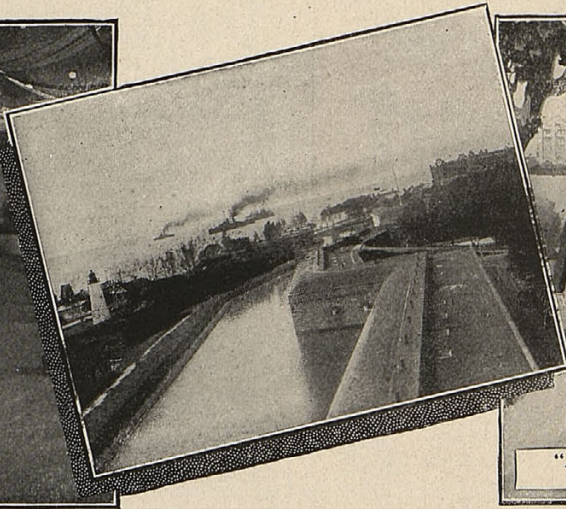
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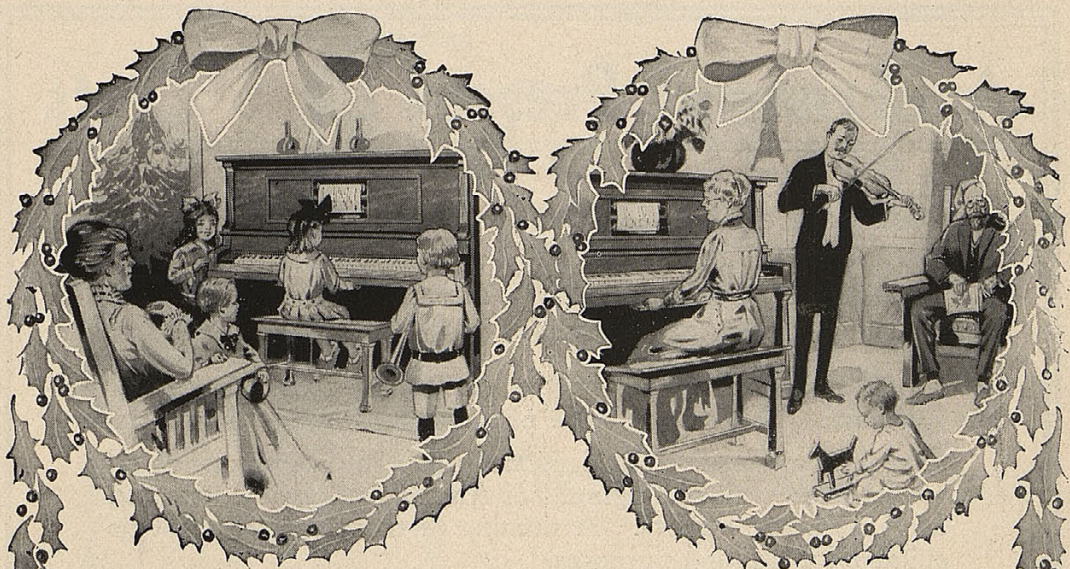
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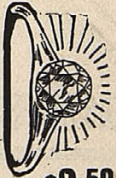
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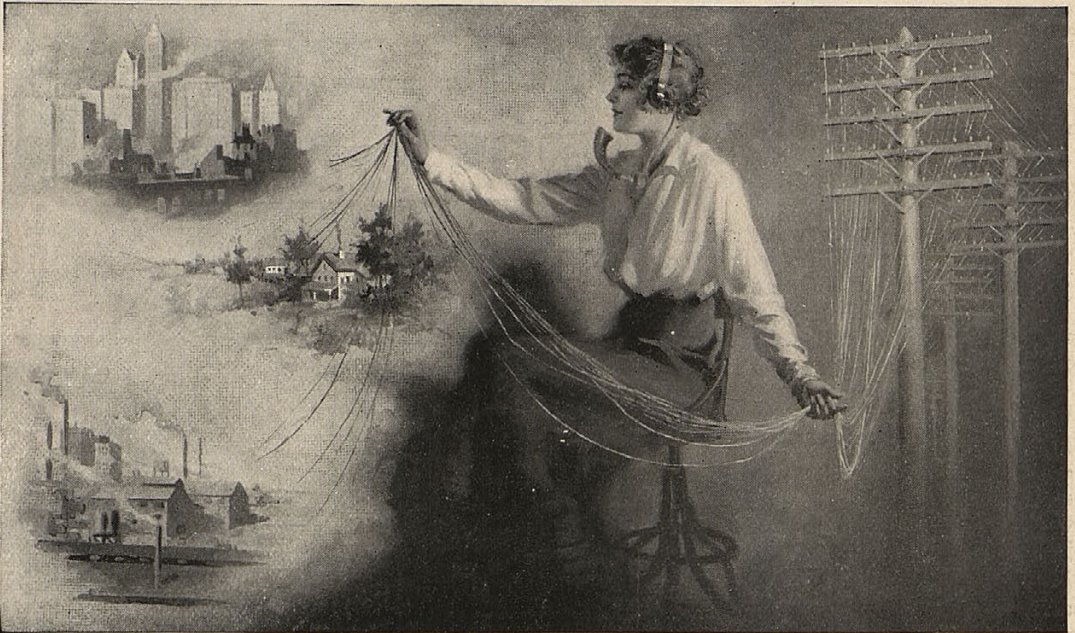


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